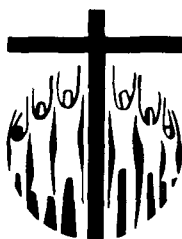
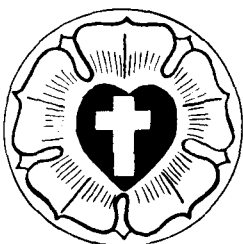


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ERRATA

Page 56 Should read NEOLIBERAL POLITICAL INFILTRATION instead of NEOLIBERAL CONTACT-MEN AND TREASURY

Page 87 Should read VII YOUTH AND STUDENTS instead of VIII YOUTH AND STUDENTS

Page 120 Should read CHAPTER 13, PROTESTS below THE FUTURE

FOREWORD

For several years, the doctrinal confrontation within The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod (LCMS) has been "reported" in the secular press. The various stories about LCMS persons and positions have run the gamut from bemused bewilderment at all the sound and fury to serious analyses of the underlying causes for the doctrinal concerns.

This book does not attempt to respond to those who are surprised at the sound and fury which comes from the serious attitude of LCMS members as to doctrine and how it is taught and preached. Suffice to say, Missouri Lutherans take their doctrine from Scriptures and they take seriously the interpretation of Scriptures.

Nor does the author focus in depth on the differences which have evolved within LCMS on interpretation of Scriptures and on methods of interpreting Scriptures. These matters are not avoided but the detailed documentation for these differences are left largely to others.

This book serves quite a different purpose. It exposes four myths. First of these is the myth that church organizations can exist without practicing "politics." Second, is the myth that the liberal drift (which has "taken hold" of many denominations) has occurred with no help from persons having a liberal persuasion. Third is the myth that current political activity of the "moderates" is (solely!) in response to the new political activity of the conservatives. And, finally, there is the myth that lies within the label "moderate." (This label has been appropriated, and given credence in much of the secular press, by the Lueking and Frey forces who favor the continuation of the liberal drift and who work diligently to oust President Jacob A. O. Preus and other conservative leaders who remain convicted to the traditional, historical (and official) orthodox doctrine of LCMS).

Reading of the LCMS doctrinal struggle in the secular press will tend to invite the belief that there are "moderates" (represented by Lueking and Frey) who have recently and reluctantly begun to engage in political action in order to counteract a serious attack by ultra-conservatives that would, if untested, drive LCMS into an un-Lutheran and un-

biblical doctrinal stance.

Reading this book -- a thoroughly documented narration of a long time effort by a dedicated and determined minority of neoliberals -- will surely destroy several popular myths. The doctrinal struggle within LCMS can be described as a confrontation between those (conservatives) who look at Scriptures as presenting revealed Truths and those (neoliberals) who look at Scripture as containing various legends and myths. This book discloses a parallel confrontation. The neoliberals would ask that we accept as truths that:

1. Politics should not be practiced in the church.
2. The changes (i.e., liberalization) that have occurred in the doctrine of church in the past several decades "happened" rather than were caused."
3. The "ultra-conservatives" have instigated political action that must now be countered, and
4. The Lueking and Frey forces are "moderate;" are quite closely aligned with the real center of LCMS theological thinking; and are the natural leadership that must now emerge to counter the extreme group that is causing such a division in the synod.

Author Tom Baker, having been a recent graduate from the St. Louis Seminary, which could be described as the eye of the doctrinal storm, has done a most capable job of collecting a vast number of interrelated words and actions which convert purported truths into proven myths.

With the myths exposed, the donations of tens, twenties, fifties and hundreds to The Kingdom Frontiers Fund (of Dean Lueking's congregation) are not likely to come from unsuspecting and trusting souls who previously accepted the myths as truths. Many readers will not only appreciate the service Author Tom Baker has done in separating fact from fiction but also will be grateful for receiving the indirect but constructive guidance on what, and what not, to support in the democratic and political process which is a part of any organization -- yes even a synod.

C. A. Swanson
335 Poage Farm Road
Cincinnati, Ohio
April 22, 1973

PREFACE

On March 11, 1973, the Commission on Theology and Church Relations (CTCR), of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) sponsored a meeting at Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin, with the Rev. Harry Huth of the CTCR and Professor Robert Smith of the St. Louis Seminary as speakers. President Lloyd Goetz of the North Wisconsin District, who requested the presence of Professor Smith, was the moderator.

Although the purpose of the meeting was to discuss the implications of the historical-critical method of interpreting Scripture, Dr. Smith did not speak to that topic. Instead, he analyzed the five legitimate elements of exegesis adopted in a CTCR document some years ago, thereby failing to speak to the real issue.

Dr. Huth and Smith were scheduled again to speak at the St. James Lutheran Gymnasium in Shawano, Wisconsin, on March 18. Six hundred people were present. Before the meeting Pastor Huth explained what the CTCR required for discussion of the historical-critical method at such meetings. But President Goetz indicated that this was not to be run like other conferences since the North Wisconsin Board of Directors had set it up. On that Huth mentioned that the North Wisconsin Board of Directors should pay Smith. Or the St. Louis Seminary should pay him for a PR job.

At the outset of the meeting Huth told the audience what is expected at such conferences by outlining three or four questions to which each speaker was to address himself. Smith again completely avoided the assigned topic. In the discussion period a lawyer stated that in the legal profession they formulate questions carefully and then expect an answer, but that Smith had not answered the assigned questions. A conservative pastor arose to say that they had wasted their time driving to the meeting because the subject had been avoided by Professor Smith. There was a loud applause from the audience. Then President Goetz reprimanded the audience for emotionalism. There was spontaneous booing of the reprimand by Goetz. Smith obviously had no intention of answering the questions, and Goetz had no intention of getting an answer.

This incident in March 1973 provides an insight into how a minority group of men in the LCMS are carrying on their plan to control completely the Missouri Synod. Some professors continue to e-

vade the issues in their public presentations, while certain District Presidents and other leaders use their political power to give advantage to the St. Louis Seminary plan to capture the Missouri Synod.

The Shawano meeting depicted one more thing: The doctrinal battle going on in the Missouri Synod is between a handful of men and the great majority in synod. Goetz and Smith and about 1400 signers of the Declaration of Determination stand against the more than 250,000 who have adhered to the Cross-roads letter, which adheres to the doctrinal, conservative position of the LCMS throughout its 125-year history. A probable estimate would say that Goetz and Smith represent fewer than 200,000 people in the synod while the loyal supporters represent at least 2,600,000 people. The subtitle of this book is inspired by the minority group versus a great synod with a magnificent 125-year heritage of doctrinal fidelity.

I am 27 years old and an assistant pastor of Trinity Lutheran Church, Sturgis, Michigan. But up until May of last year (1972), I was for five years a student of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis. In fact, I have only to complete the final requirement for a Master of Sacred Theology Degree. During my years as a seminary student I watched as a group of men not only took the reins of a seminary away from a church body, its pastors and laity, but more importantly continued a movement with a distinctly different doctrinal stance, which opposes the doctrinal position of the LCMS.

Our synod is plagued by polarization. Precious time which should be spent in speaking the Gospel needs to be taken in defending the Gospel. Of course, the church throughout its entire history has had to spend time in refuting errorists who, continue to cling to their errors. Yet, when the Gospel of Jesus Christ is at stake, as it is now in our synod, a task of defending truth is of high priority in order to teach the pure unadulterated Word of God once again to our children and their children. To such a goal this book is dedicated. Not to slander, not to defame, not to destroy, but to uncover, to heal, to clean, to bring a change of heart and a chance for reconciliation around God's truth, the Word.

This book is written to refute those false charges and slander directed toward those men who are working to keep the Missouri Synod within its con-

fessional and Biblical boundaries of the last 125 years. There is no detailed analysis of the historical background leading up to the present turmoil we are now experiencing. Instead, the concerns of this book are those of the present. The question is not how did we get here; but rather, how can we return to a common purpose and goal within the synod.

This book is written especially for those who are sick and tired of what has happened in the synod and mistakenly attribute the dissension to personality conflicts or political power plays. Some are saying they are for peace and harmony in the church, not fighting. They are interested in preaching the Gospel and getting people saved. They believe that only one thing matters, and that is getting right with Jesus Christ and being saved. They desire to end this shameful squabbling about doctrine and get on with the main business of the church.

But such a person is "trying to walk a tightrope between the right and the left. He holds to certain portions of Scripture, but he ignores the rest. He thinks he is healing the division in the church, but, in fact, he is fragmenting the church and setting death-traps for its members. He is in effect telling people that Holy Scripture is not clear in its teachings, and that we can't really be sure of what God is saying to us (Lutherans Alert, March 1973, p. 8)."

To these people this book attempts to uncover and bring into the open the terribly sad fact that the polarization of the synod is not on account of personality conflicts or political power plays; instead, our synod is experiencing one of the most crucial and basic doctrinal disputes in its 125-year history. Our synod will soon die without the surgical care so desperately needed. The surgery to be accomplished only through the power of the Holy Spirit must begin with a realization of the facts as they really are.

To facilitate a greater understanding of the present state of affairs in the LCMS, this book contains much detail involving specific persons,

places, and dates. I have in my possession documents to support every quotation, either direct or indirect. I have letters in my files to substantiate all meetings, dates, and programs which are discussed. I have contacted those persons who know details of certain circumstances better than I do in order that every important fact is corroborated. I have attempted to be as fair and honest as possible in arranging the material in order that issues rather than personalities remain the prime concern.

When persons and names have been included in this book, it is because in my judgment the circumstances of the situation warrant such disclosure. In this regard, I have not intended to attack or defame any person. My prime concern has been to defend those who have been unjustly attacked and slandered because of their desire to maintain a united witness to the Gospel as the synod has believed, taught and confessed during its 125-year history.

The book has not been written in the pursuit of money, fame or glory. In fact, if the history of this present controversy can give an inkling to the future, there is little doubt that my person, reputation and motivation will be criticized, condemned and censured. With Paul, such sufferings will not be shunned. But I am consciously bound to relate to all who will listen that a minority group of men are attempting to control the synod and foist their new doctrine on our people.

One final comment. Although I have had the fortunate advantage of much documentation, splendid advice, and helpful encouragement, no one other than myself is responsible for the contents of this book. If there are corrections, changes or modifications that should be made, all such requests and inquiries should be addressed to myself at 216 South Lakeview, Sturgis, Michigan 49091. I pray that the following will be helpful to the cause of Christ and will do much to eradicate the polarization within our synod and foster reconciliation resulting in unity of doctrine and purpose. Only with the help of God the Father working through the Holy Spirit on account of what Christ has done will this be so.

Pom Baker
May 19, 1973

INTRODUCTION

Purpose of the Book

The following is an expose of the attempts of a small rebel force to take over the ecclesiastical structure and the theological leadership of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod (LCMS). The length of this book denies one the privilege of beginning with a detailed examination of the historical events leading to the near takeover of the Missouri Synod by this minority group of men. It is instead, more important to examine the recent events of the last few years since they clearly hold the key to understanding the dissension now existing within the synod.

There may be some who do not believe that our synod is really divided. This blissful optimism reveals not stupidity but trust--a trust that what an official of synod says is true, a trust that what a seminary president states should be believed without question, a trust that those in positions of authority should know what is going on.

Unfortunately, such has not been the case. There are those persons who through naivete, deceit, ambiguity, slander or plain dishonesty have misled many to believe that all is well in synod and that what the synod has thought for 125 years is still believed, taught and confessed by all.

Denials of False Doctrine

Some of us are aware of the many times President Harms, past president of the LCMS stated that he knew of no false teachings or doctrine being tolerated in schools and seminaries. Later we will show that such statements were based on false or ambiguous information. But President Harms was not alone in his beliefs. President John Behnken acted basically the same way. Also, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis officials and publications continually gave this version of synodical problems. In the May 1964 Seminary Newsletter, Robert Grunow, seminary public relations director, stated that there were no discordant doctrinal notes on the seminary faculty and that there was "unity" in our faculty and between the faculties of St. Louis and Springfield.

For years, President Fuerbringer, past president of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis spoke at many conferences and district meetings, expressing his conviction that no one on the St. Louis fac-

ulty taught any doctrine in contradiction to the "intention of Scripture." When John Tietjen became president of the St. Louis Seminary in 1969, just prior to the synodical convention at Denver, he objected to the term "doctrinal unrest" as applied to the seminary in St. Louis. On July 26, 1969, David A. Runge of the Milwaukee Journal wrote that president Tietjen objected to the term because it has been used to say that people were teaching wrong things.

Professors at other schools in the center of the doctrinal unrest also attempted to refute the charge that false doctrine was taught. On May 20, 1970, Professor Walter Bouman, of River Forest Teachers College, stated that "there is no denial of old doctrine, no intention of new doctrines... There is no denial of Holy Scripture or any part of it." Certain groups of pastors did spread this assertion of the absence of crucial false doctrine in statements released to the general public. The Declaration Of Determination, written by Dr. Bertwin L. Frey, past president of the English District, went so far as to say that the differences which do exist "are mainly about administrative methods and procedures and the interpretation and authorship of some sections of the Bible. They are not divisive of our fellowship in the Gospel." And on April 3, 1972, Professor Arlis Ehlen was quoted by Time magazine in a statement tying others with him: "My views are quite typical of those held by all the Biblical teachers here." Again a statement which attempts to minimize the doctrinal diversity at the seminary since Dr. Ehlen was not reappointed to his professorship at the seminary because, as some contend, of his refusal to uphold and honor synodically-adopted doctrinal resolutions.

Reality of Doctrinal Change

Many statements by synodical officials, professors, pastors, and even laymen expressed opinions that no false doctrine was tolerated in the synod. But a vast amount of material contradicts such claims. In 1965, at the same time President Harms was telling the synod that no false doctrine was being taught and tolerated in synod, the president of the Michigan District stated that he was aware of the fact that it was being taught and tolerated. During that same year, over seven years ago, a vice-president of the synod admitted that false doctrine was being taught at the seminary. On August 6, 1965, one pastor wrote that among the profes-

sors at the St. Louis Seminary he knew of only five who "are orthodox or conservative."

In July 1965, an editorial in the St. Louis Lutheran made the following statement after the delegates returned from the Detroit synodical convention: "It is doubtful whether any of us will ever again want to make a case for the myth, long believed in certain circles of our church, that everywhere in our church we thought alike and everyone in our church taught alike." In May 1965, one District President told about the St. Louis vicar he had during the past year, who held to such a different understanding of Scripture that the vicar "did not realize that Missouri Synod had another viewpoint."

On March 10, 1966, Bill Irving, since removed from the Lutheran Layman League (LLL) staff, speaking at an LLL seminar in Quincy, Illinois, stated that there definitely has been a change in the doctrinal position at the St. Louis Seminary. He was happy for the change although he had been chiding his professorial friends at the seminary to come out in the open with it, be proud of it, instead of beating around the bush and insisting that things are as they always have been.

Already in 1966, pastors around the country discontinued going to conferences because of the false teachings heard from the mouths of seminary professors. As one St. Louis pastor wrote on October 25, 1966: "I again questioned some of the statements.... To this a professor replied, 'That's your opinion, but--' Then shrugged his shoulders. The group snickered, but no one spoke up. I have in the last two years discontinued going to conferences."

In 1967, conditions were already so bad at the seminary that concerned conservative pastors effectively protested the radical teachings of Professor John Elliott. Professor Elliott provided evidence of the great cleavage in March 1967, when he wrote that during the meetings between himself and the conservative pastors, "one of the most important results was the manifestation of two quite different, if not irreconcilable approaches towards the understanding and interpretation of both the Sacred Scriptures and the Lutheran Symbols."

Such a diversity in doctrine was not, of course, obvious to everyone in synod. Many a pastor has realized that the farther one lives from St. Louis, for instance, the less one knows about the true situation of what is occurring. When a Rev. Rush came from the West coast in 1967, to work at Concordia Publishing House in St. Louis, he mentioned that he discovered conditions in the church as far worse than he had thought when he was out West.

Areas Affected By Doctrinal Deviation

Such doctrinal deviation was not confined to the St. Louis Seminary. On November 11, 1969, Mr. Lawrence Marquardt a member of the Board of Control of Concordia Teachers College, River Forest, spoke at the Springfield Seminary. He related that much to his surprise, "at River Forest there is little or no desire to uphold the standards, especially theological and to deal squarely with issues. I've discovered how, for the sake of harmony, error is tolerated. The trend to rationalize in theological matters has almost become a way of life. The two theological positions... I know there are two... have divided Missouri Synod, [and] are quite apparent at River Forest." And that was spoken in 1969!

At a recent pastoral conference in St. Louis, Professor Martin Scharlemann stated that in the discussion concerning the American Lutheran Church (ALC) fellowship "it became increasingly clear that what we really confront is a pronounced difference on the question of the authority of Scripture. Below the surface is a very serious divergence on the subject of the meaning of Scripture."

Disagreements Among Minority Group

But what has been most revealing are the statements made by members of the dissident group in synod disagreeing with their own group that there are not differences in theology within the synod. Pastor Richard Koenig, editor of Lutheran Forum, which constantly attacks Missouri Synod teachings, wrote that the dismissal of Dr. Ehlen from the seminary revealed for the first time "the theological issues dividing the two parties.... Previous confrontations allowed for interpretations which played down or concealed differences between the two parties."

This is noteworthy, coming from a spokesman for those who attempt to minimize differences, not accentuate them. In the April 1971, Valparaiso publication, Cresset, John Strietelmeier, honestly and forcefully demonstrated that within the LCMS "there are parties... corresponding very roughly to Right, Left, and Center.... The operative fact is that they understand the Scriptures and the Confessions differently, and no amount of papering over can conceal those differences." It is interesting to note his remedy to this split in the church: "Our task as Liberals, forming a loyal opposition, is not, therefore, to condemn them, but to oppose them."

Inquiry

There is no doubt that the inquiry into the teachings of Concordia Seminary professors in St. Louis, initiated by President J. A. O. Preus, has done much in making clear to pastors and laity alike the huge divergence of theological beliefs and doctrine existing both in seminary and synod. This inquiry and the subsequent Report (Blue Book) which details the results of the inquiry has forced the hand of the dissident theologians. Now exposed before the whole synod as teaching contrary to what is held by the LCMS, their tactics had to change. It is not surprising, then, to read of words like "unscriptural" and "unlutheran" in articles written by President John Tietjen of Concordia Seminary--articles directed against the historic doctrines and teachings of the LCMS for the past 125 years.

Slice Pickles

This introduction is necessary for several reasons. In the first place, many who have heard that there are no differences in doctrine within our synod need to realize that the same people who once stood for the conservative position are now accusing the majority of the theologians and pastors of the LCMS of being unscriptural and unlutheran. Secondly, there are many pastors, who, though basically conservative, still think of the whole controversy as a theological squabble or simply a political power grab by one side or the other. Certainly, in every controversy, personalities may clash, but the basis of this controversy is not some "theological squabble" or an argument to determine "just the correct angle to slice pickles." (See letters to the editor, Lutheran Witness Reporter, October 15, 1972.)

Rather, the controversy centers on two irreconcilable, divergent, opposing and contradictory understandings, theologies and doctrines of the Bible, the Word of God, and the Gospel itself. As one fellow student, now a pastor, wrote: "Our circuit here is divided between liberals and conservatives and has had some pretty heated discussion. Last year we almost stopped having meetings because of the disunity." This has become a common situation.

I write this book for those pastors, professors and laity who feel that they can sit back and let the "squabble" die down. God will take care of it if we do our part. But we must speak out clearly from God's Word to warn others so that students will no longer be afraid to go to our schools lest they lose their faith.

Conservative-Neoliberal

For purpose of clarity: That majority which upholds the teachings of the LCMS as taught for the past 125 years and that minority which brings deviating teachings into the synod need to be designated. The former have been referred to as "conservatives," "orthodox," "fundamentalist," "Bible thumpers," etc. We prefer to use the term "conservative." The latter have been referred to as "liberals," "moderates," or "progressives." Because none of these terms seem to apply fairly, we choose to refer to the deviating theological position within synod as "neoliberal." Often arriving at the same conclusions as did liberal theology, yet coming to these conclusions by means of a new method of understanding Scripture, they can be thought of as new liberals, or "neoliberals."

A third reason, then, for writing this book, is not only to make clear the theological diversity within the LCMS, but also to emphasize that the conservative-neoliberal controversy is not unique to our synod--it is being experienced in every major denomination in the country. The Methodists, Presbyterians and American Lutheran Church have gone through this experience.

Outline

The book can be divided into three sections. The first deals with the teachings and doctrine of the neoliberals as I have experienced and heard them taught and professed not only at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, but even throughout The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod. The second deals with the complex and grandiose political machinery which the neoliberals have erected for the prime purpose of propagating their divergent ideas and teachings among seminary students, in church schools and congregations.

The third section deals with the thousands of protests against neoliberal doctrine and "politicking," and the steps which need to be taken by conservatives in an attempt to keep The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod on its solid and Biblical foundations of the past 125 years.

May we pray the Holy Spirit to use this book to inform, educate, caution, and open the eyes of those who still remain unconvinced that the controversy in our beloved synod does not center on the determination of just "the correct angle to slice pickles," but on the true nature of the Scriptures and the Gospel.

PART ONE

THE HISTORICAL -CRITICAL METHOD

CHAPTER 1

THAT THE HISTORICAL -CRITICAL METHOD IS USED

Synod Polarized

Because the historical-critical method has become the vehicle for interpreting the Scriptures at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis and elsewhere in our denomination, the synod is now divided theologically, doctrinally, and confessionally. This is not to say that the understanding of the Gospel is a minor issue. Rather it is to say that the use of the historical-critical method by neoliberal professors and academic administrations represents one major reason for disagreement as to what the Gospel is. Therefore, although one's understanding of the Gospel is at stake in this controversy, it is at stake in large part because of a method of interpreting Holy Scripture--the historical - critical method.

The Neutral Method?

One may well wonder how a method could lead to such dissension within a church body. To hear some of the proponents of the method discuss it, there seems to be nothing in the method which should lead to dissension. In a lecture given lately at various places on the historical-critical method, Professor Edgar Krentz (St. Louis Seminary) states that "in and of itself, the so-called historical-critical methodology is neutral.... Because of the wealth of information about the Biblical milieu that we are privileged to possess, historical-critical methodology provides us with valuable insights into the intended meaning of the written Word of God as we have it."

A prominent neoliberal advocate, Pastor Paul Bretscher, of Valparaiso, Indiana, says that such critical study "is simply a rational and dispassionate struggle to get at original meanings and relationships, of ideas, and thus at the content of words, phrases, sentences, paragraphs, chapters, and whole books of the Bible."

President John Tietjen (St. Louis Seminary) strongly supports not only the use of the historical-critical method at the seminary, but even its necessity. In criticizing President Preus' Report on the seminary inquiry, President Tietjen states that "it would not be possible to operate a Depart-

ment of Exegetical Theology at a graduate school without the use of historical-critical methodology." Objecting to President Preus' request that Dr. Ehlen teach no course in which he will have opportunity to advocate his higher critical views concerning Biblical interpretation, President Tietjen responded that "it is not possible for Dr. Ehlen to teach any of his assigned courses at a seminary level of instruction, thus taking the text of the Holy Scriptures with utter seriousness, without using historical-critical methodology.... Nor is that possible for any other faculty member who teaches a course in Biblical interpretation, regardless of the department to which he may belong."

The Concordia Theological Monthly (CTM), edited by neoliberal Professor Herbert Mayer, of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, contains an editorial by Professor Richard Caemmerer of the St. Louis Seminary, recognizing with past teachers of the church that "the method of arriving at doctrine (for example, use of exegesis, mode of arguments, etc.) may in some instances be improved upon." The laity is surely hesitant to oppose the use of the historical-critical method after hearing it spoken of as an improved method of understanding Scripture bringing valuable insights to the students as well as being demanded as THE METHOD OF INTERPRETATION at a seminary of the church. What then, is the problem? The problem lies in the fact that many pastors, professors, laity, teachers, and students in the synod totally reject the historical-critical method as a viable, let alone good, method of understanding the Scriptures.

Opposition To The Method

The strongest opposition to the use of the neoliberal historical-critical method comes from five members of the faculty of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis. Professors Ralph Bohlmann, Richard Klann, Robert Preus, (brother of President Preus), Martin Scharlemann and Lorenz Wunderlich not only disapprove the use of the method, but also refuse to use it in the courses which they teach. It is not at all uncommon to have a morning class with an Old Testament professor completely guided by the historical-critical method and then two hours later in the afternoon have a class studying the New

Testament under a professor who completely repudiates the use of the historical-critical method.

Four days after President Tietjen reported to the seminary that it was impossible for Dr. Ehlen to teach at a seminary level of instruction without using the so-called historical-critical method, Professor Robert Preus stated in the student periodical Spectrum: "For fifteen years as a teacher here I have attacked the historical-critical method as such for its false basic presupposition and its false goals and conclusions.... And I intend to do the same in the future in this school or anywhere else with the help of God." On December 17, 1972, the Cleveland Press reported Professor Preus as charging that most of the faculty at Concordia teaches the historical-critical method of Biblical interpretation, which he said, leads to a rejection of many miracles (including the raising of Lazarus from the dead), the Temptation story and the details of the story of Jesus' Baptism (including, the descent of the dove and the voice of God from Heaven)."

On May 8, 1972, Professor Martin H. Scharlemann said that the differences at the seminary revolved around "the question of the authority of Scripture," and that below the surface of some questions, like the ordination of women, there "is a very serious divergence on the subject of the meaning of Scripture."

Presidents, Professors

Dr. Oliver Harms, former president of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, also opposed any method of interpreting Scripture which led to conclusions denying the historicity of Adam and Eve or the creation of the world by God in six days. However, even in 1966, he was still made to believe that the St. Louis Seminary faculty's position on creation remained unchanged on this issue. In the Lutheran Witness Reporter of July 3, 1966, Dr. Harms' statement to that effect is based on information which he received from seminary President Alfred Fuerbringer. Of course, any student attending the seminary at that time, would readily discover that President Harms' statements were not factual. Already then use of the historical-critical method had led to teachings which allowed for the denial of the historicity (happenedness) of Adam and Eve and the creation of the world in six days.

When professors at the Springfield Seminary examined interpretations of Scripture by Professor Norman Habel of the St. Louis Seminary in May 1965, the comment was made that there was "no hope of convincing anyone as radical as Dr. Habel of an error in interpretation." The speaker

went on to say "that the brethren in the ministry will clearly see that his approach [Dr. Habel's use of the historical-critical method], though not new in the history of modern exegesis, is totally different from the biblical, historical, and theological faithful understandings of the chapter that we share with the Church of the Old and New Testament and with the Christian Church of all times, especially as it was confessed by our Lutheran Fathers and the founders of our Synod." In contrast to statements emanating from neoliberals at the St. Louis Seminary, most Springfield Seminary professors were criticizing and rejecting the use of the historical-critical method because of its complete break with historical Christianity on many crucial issues.

Also in 1965, Pastor Karl Barth, now president of the Southern Wisconsin District, realized that those who clamor for the use of the historical-critical method are really borrowing their ideas from European (especially German) theologians and in fact, were "hard put to keep up with the changing winds of European theology." He especially deplored the fact that the consistent use of the historical-critical method which left "our young students hanging in mid-air with all kinds of alternatives handed them from which they are to make their own choice... is actually performing an abortion on an embryonic theologian."

On November 8, 1965, a former professor of Concordia Theological Seminary, Springfield, realized that those demanding the use of the historical-critical method were asking us "to accept as live options--- and therefore as correct exposition of Scripture---propositions which until recently our clergy, using the same exegetical approach as the Lutheran Confessions use, have condemned as false, antisciptural teaching." Even to this day, the neoliberals agree that they no longer use the same exegetical approach as do the Lutheran Confessions, and also state that their new conclusions are often opposite to what our church as taught.

Neoliberal Openness

In the January, 1973, Affirm-- a conservative publication, Pastor Marcus Lang thanked neoliberal proponent Pastor Bretscher "for his honesty in forthrightly stating the position of the 'new theology' in the Missouri Synod." Pastor Lang concluded that "according to Dr. Bretscher... the liberal [neoliberal] theological position radically differs from what Missouri classical Lutheran theologians, and Martin Luther himself have believed."

As recent as the Autumn 1972 issue of Dialog, a neoliberal publication, Dr. Carl E. Braaten, a

Lutheran Church in America theologian, wrote that "Preus [President Preus] and his committee [the Fact Finding Inquiry Committee] made an all-out attack on the historical-critical method because they realize that it was the results of just this method that blew apart the older dogmatic concept of doctrinal unity in the Bible. This method opened our eyes to pluralism, divergent trends, historical conditionedness and relativity, and also theological contradictions in the Bible." Recall this as the same method which President Tietjen demands to be used at the seminary.

Dr. Lawrence B. Meyer, longtime LCMS leader, in his book, Missouri in Motion, echoed much of the opposition to the neoliberal method in interpretation when he said that "it is altogether inconceivable how anyone can apply the so-called new hermeneutics to the Old and New Testament Canon, and at the same time profess to believe in what the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod throughout the years has called Plenary verbal and inerrant Inspiration." This statement is proved right many a time depending on whether a student is seated in a class taught by a conservative or one taught by a neoliberal.

Objectivity

The historical-critical method is so detrimental to the teachings of the Christian Church, that even non-Lutheran theologians oppose not only its use but also the claim that it is objective. "The historical-critical method denies the role of transcendence in the history of Jesus as well as in the

Bible as a whole, not as a result of scientific study of the evidence, but because of its philosophy. Such an approach hardly merits the adjective, 'objective'." That statement by George E. Ladd, professor of New Testament theology and exegesis Fuller Theological Seminary appeared in Interpretation, January 1972. And he is only one of many who refuses to agree with President Tietjen that the historical-critical method must be used in order "to operate a Department of Exegetical Theology at a graduate school."

One of the clearest and most far-reaching condemnations of the historical-critical method comes from a 1969 graduate of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, who is now Professor of Old Testament Exegesis at Concordia Seminary, Springfield. In December of 1972, Professor Dean O. Wenthe wrote that "the historical-critical method is not a neutral tool, but rather a very special instrument that is inseparable from its own presuppositions, procedures, and results. As one surveys the anti-supernaturalistic presuppositions, the secular procedures and the far-reaching results, it becomes obvious that a wedding between the bride and 'Lutheran presuppositions' is as impossible as the marriage of light and darkness." It is interesting to note that although Professor Wenthe's opposition was well known at the seminary, whose head demands the use of the historical-critical method, not one professor refused to certify him. On the surface, it seemed that all were pleased that this student, who strongly opposed the historical-critical method, be called as a professor of the Springfield Seminary.

CHAPTER 2

WHAT IS THE HISTORICAL-CRITICAL METHOD

Although practitioners of the method continue to appeal to the neutrality and objectivity of the method, such neutrality and objectivity does not exist. In seminary class after seminary class, the Bible is no longer looked upon as the Word of God in the sense that what it contains, in all its parts, is inerrant, inspired, infallible, and without contradiction. Instead, the Bible is examined as is any non-divinely inspired human literary work with one purpose of attempting to discover whether what is written really occurred in history.

Presuppositions

Pastor Harry Huth of Rice Lake, Wisconsin and former professor at Concordia Seminary, Springfield, says: "It is an assumption of the Historical-Critical Method that the evangelists did not 'intend' to present biographical data the facticity of which was open to public scrutiny, but were rather mak-

ing highly creative use of traditions about Jesus which had gradually developed here and there in the Christian community for the purpose of communicating in the language and thought-patterns of their time how they 'interpreted' the significance of Jesus' life and death." An example from a seminary class: It is taught that Jesus may or may not have really fed 5000 people. What is totally unimportant is the historical feeding. What is important is the purpose why the evangelist wrote that Christ fed the people.

It would take a book as long as this one to explain in detail the procedures and literary or linguistic techniques which the historical-critical practitioner uses to deny what the Bible clearly states as history. It is sufficient to note that this method has led neoliberals to teach that the first chapters of Genesis are not telling us historical facts about the creation of the world, or the history of the first people on earth. Rather, these

early chapters are stories made up or borrowed from other civilizations. They are then used by the chosen people of God to make a specific point concerning the one true God.

Historical-Grammatical Method

Some elements of the historical-critical method are not new at all. They are techniques which have been used for centuries. It is not what is old about the method which causes controversy, but what is new. To begin with, the time-tested or traditional historical-grammatical method of Biblical interpretation includes (1) establishing the most accurate and reliable reading of the text of the Bible in its original languages on the basis of the best ancient manuscripts available to us (this is sometimes called lower criticism) and (2) interpreting the text within its original historical setting and with the sense of the simple and natural meaning of the text as derived by following established rules of grammar.

The historical-critical method also analyzes both the ancient texts of Scripture in the original language and seeks any information which casts light on the Biblical cultural environment. The controversy, then, is not over what the historical-critical method shares with the traditional method, but rather what the historical-critical method brings in new or foreign to the discipline of interpreting the Scriptures.

I LUTHERAN PRESUPPOSITIONS ATTACKED

A SCRIPTURE INTERPRETS SCRIPTURE

One idea important to the historical-critical method revolves around presuppositions for interpreting Scripture. In May 1965, a group of persons in the Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod, supported a movement which became known as : Faith Forward First Concerns: A Plea of Concern in Christian Love. In addressing their concerns against the historical-critical method, they described the method as one which "takes a basic step away from and is incompatible with the very fundamentals of the doctrine of inspiration and principles of interpretation which are inherent in Luther's teachings, the Confessions and Expositions of Luther's Catechisms." In his Learning to Use Your Bible (1969), Dr. Feucht summarized the conservative Lutheran method of interpretation as the taking of the "words of Scripture in their normal, literal, intended sense unless preceding or following verses compel a figurative understanding". A second important point was to "let

the Bible interpret itself. Do not read opinions into it. One passage casts light on another, the clear verse on the difficult." These statements do define the Lutheran presupposition of "Scripture interprets Scripture."

Martin Luther

In an April 4, 1972, interview with the Cleveland Lutheran Messenger President Preus referred to Martin Luther and his break with the Roman Catholic Church over the method of interpreting Scripture. He stated that Luther "also used the very common expression that the intent of Scripture is literal--not allegorical or metaphorical. And by that I mean that you normally interpret a passage in its literal sense unless the context determines you are not to take it literally...." With this the historical-grammatical method agrees. That this Lutheran presupposition of "Scripture interpreting Scripture" is considered inadequate by the St. Louis faculty majority was clear to some already in 1965. On August 8 of that year, one St. Louis pastor wrote the following after hearing St. Louis Seminary Professor Sauer present a paper on the historical-critical interpretation: "My impression is the following: Some men are abandoning sound principles of interpretation; indeed, they seem to be afraid to restate the time-tested principles Scriptura Scripturam interpretatur, Sensus literalis unus est, etc. I feel that it is left to the pious self-consciousness... of each man to decide what is God's word and what is human, fallible, errant in Scripture."

These sentiments were echoed by Professor Martin Scharlemann, member of the seminary faculty minority on May 8, 1972, when he spoke to a St. Louis Pastoral Conference on the effect of the use of the historical-critical method by the faculty majority at the seminary. "It does not require much imagination to realize what happens to the Sola Scriptura principle of the Reformation under the impact of this latter approach [historical-critical methodology].... It dissolves. There is nothing objective to talk about in dealing with a Biblical text, because the next person understands it differently."

Diversity of Opinion

The neoliberals have made clear that Scripture does not have the last word in theology. In fact, in contrast to the traditional historical grammatical method of interpretation which makes all of mankind's discoveries and theories subservient to Scripture, the historical-critical method no longer

takes for granted the truthfulness of Scripture, if archaeology; for instance, may suggest another point of view. Before very long, there exists a huge diversity of opinion and beliefs among those persons using the historical-critical method. One pastor wrote to a neoliberal professor in January 1968: "The ultimate effect of the theological diversity is the weakening of the Sola Scriptura principle, which, in turn, is inseparably linked to the Lutheran Christological approach to the Scripture." In apparent support of this contention, one of the neoliberal St. Louis professors, Walter Bartling, Jr., recently stated that "Sola Scriptura is a brainwashing which I forcefully react against. ... When you have said Christ is Lord you've said what is really important; in fact, you've about said it all."

B INERRANCY

One of the main points of disagreement between the conservatives and the neoliberals revolves around the concept of inerrancy. The doctrines that the Bible never errs, and that there are no real contradictions in the Bible. The Bible always tells the truth whether it speaks of the Gospel, or the historicity or geography of the time. The term inerrancy can best be thought of as "without error" rather than "absolute perfection." For example, conservatives do not insist that the number of men in a battle is absolutely precise; what is insisted on is that the number contains no error. Some conservatives theorize that numbers are rounded off. Others recognize the possibility of an error in translation. Yet all believe that the Bible, although not absolutely precise, is most certainly without error.

Definition of Inerrancy

At first glance, it would appear that even the neoliberals believe that the Bible is inerrant. In an attempt to bring understanding to the controversy, President Tietjen recently wrote that some in the synod "do not realize that our professors use the method (of historical-critical methodology) as an instrument for a proper understanding of the text and only in conjunction with basic Lutheran presuppositions about the inspiration, the truthfulness, the infallibility, and the authority of the Bible as the Word of God to men." Here not only does President Tietjen admit that basic Lutheran presuppositions include the infallibility of Scriptures but also he infers that the faculty majority at the seminary also holds to the infallibility of the Scriptures. Yet this is not so on two counts.

The first is that one who uses the historical-critical method in the true and complete form cannot treat the Bible as errorless. And the second is that the term infallibility or inerrancy means something entirely different to the neoliberal. The Bible is "inerrant" in that it accomplishes whatever God wants it to accomplish. It does not mean that the Bible is without error. Therefore, for the neoliberal, God accomplishes his purpose even through an error-filled Bible--Errors of history (the reality of Adam and Eve), in the memory of the writers, geography and even teaching (that women should be subordinate to men).

In May 1966, Robert Hoyer, a neoliberal working on the Parish Education Board staff, wrote that "It does not disturb me greatly when a friend and fellow Christian disagrees with me in his interpretation of some passages (of Scripture) or in his acceptance of some geographical or historical statement in the Bible." Richard Philbrick of the Chicago Tribune correctly realized that although moderates [neoliberals] believe that the Bible is the inspired Word of God, they are not willing to say that it is absolutely without error."

Literalist-Fundamentalist

In an interview with the Chicago Tribune on July 21, 1971, Dennis Briskin described conservatives who believed that the Bible is inspired by God, and therefore infallible, as literalists. He further stated that "on the other side is a group including Schlesselman, Mr. Strieter, and the Rev. Dean Lueking, pastor of Grace Lutheran Church, River Forest, who see the Bible as sacred but not a precise history of events and persons. Their approach (to interpreting Scriptures) is known as the critical-historical method of interpretation."

Another term used by neoliberals to describe conservatives in The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod is 'fundamentalist.' Although it is obvious that conservative Lutherans and true fundamentalists are miles apart in their understanding of Scripture, neoliberals continue to label conservatives with this derogatory term.

One person totally disagreeing with the neoliberal contention that the Scriptures err wrote: "Scripture will not contradict itself on any one article of faith, even though to your mind a contradiction and an irreconcilability exist." That man was Martin Luther and he said that in a sermon in 1532. In contrast to this position of the entire Lutheran Church until the advent of the historical-critical method, the neoliberals are not concerned

when a professor, pastor or teacher says that the Bible contains errors. Realizing then that neoliberals like President Tietjen refer to the Bible as "inerrant" in a sense completely opposite to what the Lutheran Church has always taught, will help all of us understand not only the depth of differences between conservatives and neoliberals but also the extent of neoliberal ambiguity or deception in their use of language.

Genesis 1-11

An interesting case in point is the neoliberal statements and understanding of Genesis 1-11. Back in April of 1965, a group of professors, including neoliberals, Alfred Fuerbringer, A. C. Repp, and Herbert Mayer, wrote that "we all agree that what is told us in the first eleven chapters of Genesis actually happened." It is difficult not to call this statement a lie since such a teaching certainly was and is allowed to be denied by members of the faculty majority in St. Louis. In fact, it was not uncommon to be laughed at by professors and students alike when one declared in class that he affirmed belief in the historicity of Adam and Eve. In April 1972, at the Louisiana Pastoral Conference, St. Louis Professor Walter Bartling Jr., said: "I can't answer the question, 'Do you believe in the historicity of Adam and Eve?' Historicity and facticity are not even in my dictionary".

The position of the LCMS on the historicity of Adam and Eve is stated by Martin Luther in 1523: I have often said that whoever would study Holy Scripture should be sure to see to it that he stays with the simple words as long as he can and by no means depart from them unless an article of faith compels him to understand them differently. . . . Therefore, when Moses writes that God created heaven and earth and whatever is in them in six days, then let this remain six days, and do not venture to devise any comment that six days were one day. But if you cannot understand how this could have been done in six days, then grant the Holy Spirit the honor of being more learned than you are.

Presidents Duped

As far as can be determined, all presidents of the LCMS have held to this position. When former President J. W. Behnken realized that Concordia Seminary was drifting from the teachings handed down by our forefathers, he lamented that "some present day theologians hold that God's account of creation is not to be taken literally, factually or historically, but must be understood as a legend, a

parable, a symbol, a myth, etc." Also former President Oliver R. Harms made his position clear that the Missouri Synod needed to remain Missouri "with a clear-cut statement of adhering to the Scriptures in the singular way of accepting the Creation accounts as a factual record of the events recorded in the Pentateuch." Both Presidents Behnken and Harms at that time believed that this position of theirs was also the position of the entire faculty at the St. Louis Seminary.

Not only was the faculty statement quoted above part of the neoliberal means to keep the Presidents in ignorance of what was actually being taught, but statements from seminary officials claimed that Missouri Synod doctrine had not changed.

On July 3, 1966, President Harms wrote that St. Louis Seminary President Alfred Fuerbringer told him that "no member of the faculty is any way disposed to deny that God created all things by His almighty power." Harms went on to conclude that "our doctrinal position on creation remains unchanged. . . we take the position that Adam and Eve were individual persons, historic characters. That is what Genesis says. That is what the Lutheran Confessions say." But unfortunately, contrary to President Fuerbringer's statement, that is not what faculty members of the St. Louis Seminary were saying in the classrooms or at the pastoral conferences.

Already in 1965, Professor Alfred Sauer at a pastoral workshop at Concordia College, Portland, Oregon, suggested that the author of Genesis 1-11 was not trying to give us the history of man. He felt it possibly was just a sermon. He said that the purpose of Genesis One "was not to know how the world came into being but to prove that God created."

On November 10, 1964, a St. Louis Pastoral Conference studied Sauer's Thesis on Creation And Science. Thesis Number 2 was that "the Christian therefore can hold that the mystery of the origin of the world (Genesis 1) and the mystery of man's coming into being (Genesis 2) remain mysteries of God's creative power." The stage was set for the neoliberal to allow for the denial of the historicity of Adam and Eve.

Protests From The Field

It was not long after that protests from pastors and laity were sent to officials of the synod and the seminary. Many realized that the neoliberal seminary position would soon lead to acceptance of evolution as an allowable alternative to answer the

question as to how God created the world. Although neoliberal professors continued to deny this viability, at times the truth was clearly revealed. In a seminary newsletter sent to all alumni of the seminary, neoliberal Professor Sauer was quoted concerning his position on theistic evolution: "I hold that when a scientist who is a believing child of God uses the concept of evolution as a hypothesis in his scientific labors, he consciously does it within the framework of his faith that God alone is eternal, that God is the maker of all else that exists, and also that God is still active in what the church has called 'Creatio Continua.'" And again, December 1972, Sauer also wrote that "if a theory of evolution is accepted, one must make allowance for a special act of God, whereby He brought the human race into existence."

These statements make it clear that the neoliberal forces within the synod were ready not only to depart from the cherished position of the synod on the interpretation of Genesis I, but also to allow the theory of evolution to be used as a possible explanation of how God created the world.

A clear example of what happens when neoliberal views on Genesis I are taught to laity, occurred in 1964, when St. Louis Professor George Hoyer spoke to a Walther League Convention on the subject of creation and evolution. The discussion so upset some young persons that the Lincoln, Nebraska Conference of Pastors took action. They protested Professor Hoyer's presentation. Professor George Hoyer wrote back stating: "The Christian faith does not stand or fall on the basis of a view of creation or of Genesis 1-3. Many Christian people do harmonize evolution (in various definitions) and Genesis by reading the Genesis account as a form of literature quite different from what we today call 'history.'"

Extended correspondence resulted in the conservative pastoral conference telling neoliberal Professor Hoyer that "if such subjective hermeneutics are to be adopted, then any person can get around taking anything literally by simply calling it poetry." The conference wrote: "A youth we know returned from the convention and told how we can now believe the Bible and evolution (no conflict anymore). Hoyer may not have wanted to establish convictions, but that is precisely what was done without the clear proclamation by a recognized leader of the Biblical viewpoint which synod has always held."

JEDP

One reason the neoliberals cannot accept Genesis

1-3 as historical fact is their contention that all of Genesis was written neither by one man nor at the same time. This theory (called the JEDP hypothesis--each letter representing a section or body of material in Genesis written at a different time) is a direct result of the neoliberal refusal to allow the Scriptures to interpret themselves. Nowhere in the whole Bible is there a statement allowing for the possibility that Adam and Eve were not historical. In fact, the basis for original sin in the Pauline letters is the historicity of Adam and Eve. Yet it is now not uncommon to hear neoliberals speaking of the doctrine of original sin as understood by Paul to be outmoded for our time.

Every neoliberal outside the LCMS openly acknowledges his acceptance of the JEDP theory as an obvious conclusion after using the historical-critical method. But believe it or not, for the longest time St. Louis Seminary officials refused to acknowledge that what was indeed being taught as a viable theory was, in fact, being taught. In June of 1965, President Fuerbringer wrote that "to the best of my knowledge, the JEDP theory against which my father and Walter A. Maier inveighed has not been given a 'Lutheran baptism.'" And yet one year before, a missionary who spent five years in the Philippines wrote: "When I was serving there [mission field] I often thought how good it would be for some of our professors [from the St. Louis Seminary] to be in that kind of situation, having to relate the basic Scripture truths in the simplest ways possible in order for the people to understand. In that type of situation the JEDP theory shows itself for what it really is, only an exercise in speculation." One is almost forced to affirm either one of two statements. Either President Fuerbringer was completely naive as to what his faculty members were espousing, or he realized that 1965 was too early to let synod and its members know what was going on at the seminary.

That the faculty majority accepts the JEDP source hypothesis theory of Genesis was made clear in a St. Louis Post-Dispatch interview with Dr. Arlis Ehlen, on March 6, 1972: "Scholars have documented the existence of at least three main theological sources that went into the final version of the first five books of the Old Testament. These three sources can be assumed to represent different meanings when they crop up in the various sections.... As a result, the Rev. Dr. Arlis J. Ehlen was thought by some Missouri Synod members to be undermining the authority of Scripture by pointing out that earlier sources referring to the Hebrews crossing the Red Sea do not seem to have suggested the miraculous aspects as much as later accounts apparently do." To clarify the above, Dr. Arlis Ehlen allowed for the possibility not only that

there was no crossing of the Red Sea on dry land, but that the crossing may have been in boats! Because the neoliberal position on "Scripture interprets Scripture" and "inerrancy" is so far away from the conservative synodical understanding of the same, it is no wonder that Dr. Arlis Ehlen came to conclusions regarding Genesis which completely contradicted Scripture and the synodical doctrinal stance. The wonder is that the seminary officials could keep the neoliberal teachings at the seminary as secret as they did.

II RESULTS OF THE USE OF THE HISTORICAL - CRITICAL METHOD

A ALLOWABILITY

Tentative and Theoretical

We have seen how, on the one hand, seminary officials deny that things are changing at the seminary and on the other hand, there is a great amount of evidence that neoliberal teachings are contradicting what was once taught. It is not uncommon to hear a neoliberal say that he believes in an historical Adam and Eve. This can be confusing until the layman realizes that even these so-called personal "beliefs" are also considered as tentative and theoretical reconstructions of the actual Biblical event. In a 1972 lecture to the Board of Control in St. Louis, Professor Edgar Krentz maintained that every historical-critical conclusion dealing with the historical side of the Scriptures is both tentative (because more evidence may appear later to change one's mind), and theoretical (because we cannot be sure that we are right).

In this area of the historicity or "happenedness" of the accounts in the Scriptures, no person using the historical-critical method can demand that his personal beliefs be accepted as true and unalterable, that is, as revealed truths which ought to be held by every pastor of the LCMS. Anyone who does so is considered by the neoliberal to be a legalist. One may have certain personal interpretations, but he must ALLOW for another's interpretations, even if they contradict what he personally believes. This permissiveness or allowability is one of the major findings of the Fact Finding Committee.

In brief, for the layman, the distinction between personal beliefs and what is ALLOWED is a good indication of the large variety of tentative and theoretical interpretations permitted in many of the passages in the Scriptures. This distinction also reveals the depth of the controversy between neoliberals, insisting on the necessity of permitting all manner of theological conclusions which result

from the use of the historical-critical method, and conservatives, who reject as unlutheran and unbiblical any and all assumptions of the historical-critical method which leads to a denial of the clear, literal, inspired, and inerrant text of the sacred Scriptures.

Diversity In Unity

Because of the consistent conclusions of the historical-critical method that refute the clarity and inerrancy of the Scriptures, one is not surprised to find the neoliberals plead for a greater diversity of theological beliefs within our fellowship. Pastor Bertwin Frey, a leading neoliberal in the LCMS pleads that "within the boundaries laid down in Article II there are areas of theology where there can be differences of opinion and differences of interpretation that are not divisive of fellowship." This, of course, is something the church has always taught. What is new is that neoliberal Dr. Frey believes that today there can be those within the LCMS who may be allowed to question the historicity of the Jonah account or other historical incidents recorded in the Scriptures and also referred to by our Lord Jesus Christ in no uncertain terms as being historically true. We will review later Dr. Frey's co-authorship of the Open Cleveland letter which promoted permissiveness in regard to the historicity of Jonah.

In the past, diversity of interpretation was allowed only for those sections of the Scriptures where the Scriptures themselves were not clear but today the neoliberals are asking for diversity of interpretations for those sections on which the Scriptures in their literal and plain sense are clear!

Professor Herbert Mayer, editor of the Concordia Theological Monthly, asks for a "willingness to recognize greater variety in theological statements and positions." At the same time, President Tietjen was quoted by the Lutheran Witness Reporter as asking for "a diversity of viewpoints, even conflicts of viewpoints."

Student Protests

To understand what the neoliberal representatives are demanding, comments made by the Seminary student James Voelz at a 1971 Milwaukee convention's open hearing on the seminary inquiry are most revealing. In supporting the right of President Preus to conduct an inquiry into the teachings of the faculty at the seminary, student Voelz said that the question at the seminary "is not what the professors themselves individually believe, because these men by and large are fine and good Christian men. The problem is one of allowability... what is

allowed to be believed by the students. If I may just take one or two very brief examples... In one class that I was in, a friend of mine continually brought up the example of Adam and Eve and his-
toricity and he was literally laughed at by the professor.... The matter of 'allowability' is such that the students are being trained and sent out of the seminary with beliefs such as homosexuality is not wrong. This issue came up in our pastoral theology class. And men like this I would really not want my children to be instructed under. And for this reason I would support President Preus' inquiry."

For too long the laity of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod have been told that students at the seminary find nothing wrong with what the professors teach. However, the fact of the matter is that a strong minority of students continue to speak out against what they hear both in and out of class. On January 21, 1971, thirty students sent a letter to President Preus, stating that "there are basic theological differences among members of the faculty, and that any attempt to deny this is either sheer naivete or outright falsehood." Parts of the letter detailed teachings heard in and outside the classroom from neoliberal professors. Some of these were: "The existence of angels and demons is doubtful.... Many of the miracles in Acts did not really occur... the JEDP theory (or some derivative thereof) is almost exclusively taught without even presenting Mosaic authorship as a viable option.... The Scriptures are inspired only in the same sense as our sermons are inspired... evolution is compatible with Scripture... ordination of women is Biblically permissible." In fact, the letter of January 1971 coincided so remarkably with the findings of the Fact Finding Committee, that it was included in the Report of The Synodical President (Page 131 ff.) which detailed the findings of the seminary inquiry.

Such a situation for students exists not only at the seminary in St. Louis. Other schools, especially Valparaiso University, River Forest and Concordia Seward are experiencing these same kinds of neoliberal doctrinal takeovers. Questions are not only being asked about the historicity of Adam and Eve but also the virgin birth and resurrection of Jesus Christ. On February 18, 1972, two students from River Forest wrote an official of the synod, complaining that their "education department is also subjectivistic and advocates the new educational teaching methods.... There is no faculty self-discipline.... The Science department teaches that there are no absolutes or answers regarding creation, etc. They teach a theistic evolution.... Sad to say, we have a very big problem with drugs. It is

amazing to see the people that are being sent to our congregations. Screening is almost unknown."

The above demonstrates that the concept of "allowability" is a basic element for an understanding of the neoliberal mind-set. Whether a neoliberal affirms or denies the historicity of a particular passage of the Scriptures is for him not really important, because for him either position is just a tentative position of a theoretical hypothesis. Professor Herbert Mayer says, that he himself believes Jesus was tempted by a personal devil in the wilderness. Yet if another scholar disagreed by means of accepted exegetical grounds, such a disagreement should be permitted as long as the Gospel of Jesus Christ was not affected. These statements by neoliberals only serve to show the meaning of the concept "diversity in Unity." A conservative layman from Cincinnati Mr. C. (Chet) A. Swanson wrote the St. Louis Seminary Board of Control on January 9, 1972: "We cannot stop the wide variations of teaching on personal devils, angels, miracles and on historicity of Adam, Eve, and Jonah in other church denominations. But we must stop them within The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. Or else, we have no Synod; ie., no walking together'."

Intention

Why is there such a need for this diversity of teachings as demanded by the historical-critical definition of "intention." Martin Luther himself was rarely satisfied with the superficial literal sense of Scripture. To realize that Adam and Eve were historical was one thing. But, still to be discovered was the purpose or intention which God had in mind in bringing to us this information. For Luther, Paul makes it clear that God's intention in describing how he created the world and telling who were the first people inhabiting earth, was to impress upon us the reason for our original sin. Also the Adam and Eve historical account brings a great promise to us in Genesis 3:15 that God will give us an answer to our dilemma of being sinners.

The neoliberal is also interested in the intention of the Scriptures. The problem arises when the neoliberal accepts the Gospel intention, but then says that the historicity of the account can be questioned. The superior importance of the Gospel intention of the text, even to the degree that the literal historical sense can be questioned, has clearly come to the surface during the controversy surrounding neoliberal Professor Arlis Ehlen. While no explanation was given for not renewing his con-

tract, there is little doubt that the cause was his neoliberal teaching. The Board of Higher Education would not concur with the Seminary's Board of Control which was prepared to have Professor Ehlen continue teaching in accordance with 'the new theology' adopted by the faculty majority. Professor Bartling expressed the consensus of the faculty majority when he excused Ehlen's questioning of the Red Sea narrative by saying that "Ehlen felt unlikely the crossing of the Red Sea should be taken literally, so he tried to accept what the author intended."

In the seminary student publication Spectrum (March 15, 1972), Dr. Ehlen's comments are revealing. "I certainly did not deny that God has done or still does miracles. I specifically affirmed God's miraculous acting in connection with the Exodus of Israel from Egypt and the crossing of the sea. I do, however, think it is entirely appropriate --and absolutely essential--that we inquire about the intended sense of the text." It is interesting to note that nowhere in the article and nowhere else that I can find, does Dr. Ehlen agree that the intended sense of this section is that the specific account of the crossing of the Red Sea included the Israelites walking across dry land. By remaining as general and vague as he does in speaking about the "miracle" and by falling back on the "intended" sense, Dr. Ehlen continues to sound both conservative and Missouri Synod. But he is neither.

Different Definition

Professor Scharlemann, made very clear in his presentation to the St. Louis Seminary Board of Control that the word "intention" has different meanings for the conservative and the neoliberal. For the conservative, Scripture itself, by means of the clear and literal sense, where found, gives the intention of the passage. But, for the neoliberal, the clear sense of Scripture, especially, when dealing with historical occurrences, may be in error. Professor Scharlemann once used the example of the New Testament account of the man possessed by demons to show that the conservative would interpret God's intention to teach that Jesus healed even a man possessed with real demons, while the neoliberal may conclude that the intention of God was to indicate that Jesus has great power over evil forces. Therefore, the denial of the reality or existence of demons is left to the area of allowability.

With this in mind, we quote President Tietjen's statement found in his booklet, Fact Finding Or Fault Finding?: "No faculty member denied the Scripture testimony concerning angels." Realizing now what the neoliberals mean by the concept "in-

tention," one understands the ambiguity in President Tietjen's statement. The problem is that what the neoliberal faculty majority (according to the historical-critical method) thinks is the "testimony concerning angels" is not what the LCMS Church for 125 years has understood as the teachings of the Scripture concerning angels.

Intention

Along these same lines we recall President Tietjen's reply to President Preus' request that Professor Ehlen not teach any course where he could advocate his neoliberal views: "I have had a number of doctrinal discussions with Dr. Ehlen in recent months. In those discussions he has specifically affirmed the authority of Scripture in its entirety and in all its parts. He has stated that he affirms the facticity of what the Scriptures intends to present as facts." (underling mine) The ambiguity lies in the fact that Professor Ehlen does not think that Scripture intends to present as a fact what the clear sense of Scripture presents as fact!

In explaining his position on angels Professor Arlis Ehlen wrote: "In this matter as in all others connected with Biblical exegesis, I am concerned to be totally faithful to the intention of the Divine Author." In the same statement Professor Ehlen explained his reasons for permitting denial of the miraculous happenings at the Red Sea Crossing as described by Scripture: "I accept what the Sacred writers evidently intended by their elaboration of the miraculous details; namely, to magnify the glory of God's great act of Salvation and to heighten its impact on those who hear in faith. In this case, too, my ultimate concern therefore, is to be faithful to the intended meaning of the Biblical text." This neoliberal principle stands in marked contrast to the conservative presupposition that the intended sense of the text is what Scripture itself interprets as God's purpose in telling us both the historicity of the situation and its applicable message in relation to the Gospel. To deny the former, is for the conservative to refute God's own account of history as to why the latter is certain.

Realizing how the neoliberals change the meaning of the word intention, President Preus in the seminary's Spectrum (March 15, 1972) responded to Dr. Tietjen's support of Professor Ehlen: "I'm very uneasy about a method of Biblical interpretation which says despite the fact that this is treated as factual in the text of both Old and New Testaments, the interpreter says, 'But I don't think it happened.' In my opinion there is something wrong with that kind of Biblical interpretation."

B THE DOMINO THEORY

The question is often asked why the neoliberals continue to insist on the use of the historical-critical method once they see that so much of what the Missouri Synod has taught and believed for 125 years is now questioned. The answer which the neoliberal offers centers on the importance of the Gospel message of Jesus Christ. For the Lutheran neoliberal the intention of Scripture always can be defined in terms of Law and Gospel. That is, even though interpreters of Genesis 1-11 may be in a state of confusion and questioning concerning the historicity of the events described, one thing is not confusing, i. e., the Gospel message which rings loud and clear that God has created the heavens and earth and promises to bring man back into a loving relationship. For the neoliberal so long as the point or intention of the passage is understood in either Law or Gospel terms, the question of the historicity of the event is not important.

This neoliberal point of view is repudiated by conservatives. Former Synodical President Harms summarized the conservative position on July 3, 1966. Using the example of Genesis he rejects the neoliberal tendency to deny the historicity of those events in the first chapters. President Harms wrote: "Whatever literary form or mode the first chapters of Genesis may appear to be cast in, the Genesis account tells us historical truth. God created the world and everything in it in six days, according to Genesis 1. We can't read anything more than Genesis says, and we can't say anything less than Genesis says." To emphasize the importance of holding to the historicity of Genesis in order that the Gospel will not be destroyed, he continued: "Think of all the articles of faith involved in it: God, man, sin, redemption, faith in Christ, etc." It is truly unfortunate that President Harms believed that the entire seminary faculty agreed with him. Such, of course, was not the case.

President Harms' attitude can be understood in terms of what is often referred to as the domino theory. It is obvious that if one takes away the resurrection of Jesus Christ, the hope for salvation, says Paul, is destroyed. Similarly, unlike the neoliberal, the conservative believes that when one part of Scripture is denied, the same method of interpretation can and will be used by consistent honest historical-critical scholars to deny the other parts of the Scriptures. A group of concerned Missourians under the banner of Faith Forward First Concerns, in May 1965 said: "All the while the proponents of the 'new hermeneutic' (historical-critical method) take pride in the fact that they have retained faith in Christ as Savior and the Bible as a source and record of God's great acts. They a-

dopted the 'new hermeneutic', fully convinced that Christ and the inerrant Word have lost no significance, yet they strip truths from our historic confessions in order to make our faith palatable to human reason. But the price is too high. It first cost us historic truths in Genesis, then it counts Jonah as a fish story, after much messianic prophecies are discounted. The New Testament is next in line." Quoting Luther, they say, "If we tear out one thing, we tear out everything."

A similar line of thought is echoed by AD-FIVE of Lutherans United For Bible Truth which appeared in the April 14, 1973, St. Louis Lutheran:

The Flood may have little to do with the Gospel, but it certainly shows us how God hates sin and punishes it. The wars which were visited upon Israel have nothing to do with Gospel, yet their account is most profitable for us, for they show how God punishes a nation which rebels against Him. Our Lord Jesus in His discourses mentioned many a thing which was not evangelical in nature. The Sermon on the Mount is almost entirely an exposition of the moral law. Christ spoke about Satan, the 'liar and murderer' from hell. He also spoke about divorce, the destruction of Jerusalem, the awful signs in nature and in the life of the nations which would precede His second coming. Shall we ignore, omit or cut out of the Bible all these things because they do not express the Gospel? Shall we, as 20th Century theologians suggest, bypass them as unimportant? Can we say that anything that God said is unimportant? . . . Experience shows that whoever embarks upon the program of surgery called 'Gospel reductionism' is in grave danger of losing the Gospel itself in the process. When reason has planted the cancer of pride and disobedience into the heart, it continues to grow until it has eaten away the Person and Work of Christ. If I take the liberty of amputating what I consider unnecessary and unprofitable, who is to stop me when I no longer consider Christ's atonement and resurrection necessary?

In November 1965, a former professor of the Springfield, Illinois Seminary wrote that "we are being asked to accept as live options and therefore as correct exposition of Scripture--propositions which until recently our clergy, using the same exegetical approach as the Lutheran Confessions use, have condemned as false, anti-Scriptural teaching. . . The historicity of Genesis 1-11; the correctness of New Testament statements about the authorship of the Pentateuch, about David's Psalms, about

Isaiah, etc., the doctrine of the soul; the utter trustworthiness of the Scriptures in 'historical,' geographical, and similar matters...." In the same letter this professor realized the results of such teachings: "And by creating doubts concerning the trustworthiness of the Scriptures, he will put into jeopardy the salvation of God knows how many souls."

Neoliberal professor Walter Bartling Jr. told a pastoral conference last year after being asked whether he believes in a 6-day creation: "Don't ask me. Do you believe in a 6 day creation?.... I have problems with the virgin birth, real presence, bodily resurrection.... I can't bear the burden of Scriptural infallibility." That statement comes from one who has steeped himself in an honest consistent use of the historical-critical method and is faced with the very real possibility that his doctrinal stance is no longer that of the LCMS.

As we established earlier, the claims of those (like Drs. Tietjen and Bretscher) that Lutheran presuppositions can protect the historical-critical practitioner from going awry are not borne out. Lutheran presuppositions and historical-critical methodology are mutually exclusive. Honest and consistent use of one precludes the other from being used with integrity. Dr. Bartling Jr. is one example of the outcome. His cry of "I can't bear the burden of Scriptural infallibility" is only too common when the historical-critical method is permitted. (And, we need recall that Dr. Tietjen not only "permits" but also insists that the historical-critical method must be used.)

C INERRANCY VERSUS GOSPEL

Another question often on the minds of laymen throughout the synod, when they hear of the results of the neoliberal historical-critical method, is how such Christian professors can destroy the Bible as they seem to be doing? Instead though, the neoliberals do not see themselves as destroying the precious teachings of the Scriptures, but rather as upholding and making them more clearly known. The neoliberals believe that conservatives are more concerned about the doctrine of inerrancy than they are about the message of the Gospel. So many of their accusations against the conservatives are made for this reason.

Gospel Becomes Norm

On September 29, 1972, James Adams, of the Cincinnati Post said that "Dr. Tietjen emphasized that all of Scripture has to be interpreted in view

of the Gospel. This position holds that the historical accuracy of the Children of Israel crossing the Red Sea is not as important as the fact that God delivered his people." Recalling Dr. Tietjen's support of Professor Ehlen's belief in the intention of Scripture, one can easily see that for Dr. Tietjen, Dr. Ehlen, and all other neoliberals the historicity of the Scriptural narratives is not as important as is the message of the Gospel which the text contains. So long as you realize that God DID deliver the people at the Red Sea in some way or other, it is not important whether you agree or disagree with the Scriptural interpretation of the event. Here again, we see how the principles of "Scripture interprets Scripture" and the "literal sense" of Scripture are replaced by a theology which sees all the intention of Scripture in a Gospel understanding only, thereby making unimportant the historicity of the narrative described.

In his lecture to the Board of Control, neoliberal Professor Habel stated that "as for the facts [of Scripture narratives], God is free to select and present them as He wills, expresses and chooses and uses.... All are important not as bare facts, but as they serve the Gospel.... Faith clings to the Lord of promises, not specific facts of the Scripture." In one sense, these statements are inspiring if understood to mean that the bare facts themselves are useless unless one can relate them to the Gospel promises of our salvation through faith in Jesus Christ

But the problem with these neoliberal statements is not that the Gospel should be supreme but rather that the Gospel can continue to be certain even with the contradiction and DENIAL of the historical facts. On April 5, 1966, one student taking a course under neoliberal professor Walter Bouman of River Forest, stated that the creation account was taught as a story which proclaimed Law and Gospel. She complained, however, that Professor Bouman taught that "it is not necessarily factual and matters not whether it is or isn't. The same holds true for other Old Testament stories. They are simply a framework for Law and Gospel." According to a letter she wrote, the neoliberal professor taught that it does not matter "if the Bible contains error, since error does not invalidate the message of Law and Gospel. God can also work through error."

Basis of Faith

The neoliberals truly believe that if one disagrees with their position on the Gospel of Jesus Christ being the norm or main criterion for understanding all Biblical texts, then that person has his faith resting on the doctrine of inerrancy rather

than on the Gospel. Neoliberal Pastor Dean Lueking was interviewed by the Chicago Daily News on October 15, 1972. The article inferred that the question of Biblical "inerrancy" is at the heart of the synodical controversy and that "allowing for some minor figurative interpretation, Dr. Preus has held for strict literal interpretation of the Bible." Dr. Lueking stated: "But what sells the Bible, in effect, is the Gospel, not any predetermined notion of inerrancy." This predetermined notion of inerrancy supposedly characterizes the position of the conservatives. Neoliberal Pastor Bretscher also believes that the doctrine of inerrancy is thought by conservatives to be more important than the Gospel. "Agreed as we are that the Holy Scriptures are the only source and norm of the Gospel, does it follow that the truthfulness of the Bible's Gospel derives from, depends on, and is guaranteed by a broader truthfulness and inerrancy of the Scriptures as a whole, founded on their inspiration?" A Layman's Guide To The Issues, by Martin E. Marty, states that "we [neoliberals] do not believe in Christ because some doctrine about the inerrancy of Scripture assures the truth of this message."

In May 1972, Pastor Bretscher questioned the procedure of the Fact Finding Committee which inquired into the teachings of Concordia Seminary faculty members. In finding the questioning focused "primarily on such matters as the nature and authorship of the Biblical literature, the interpretation of particular texts, and concepts of historical and ontological reality," Dr. Bretscher felt that "the fact finding committee was in error concerning the importance of the Gospel."

Unfortunately, the neoliberal point of view of the problem is not accurate. Although even the CTCR (Commission on Theology and Church Relations) did recognize that one part of the synodical problem was that some "who defend the authority of Holy Scripture, have in effect, made the Bible rather than the Gospel, the heart and center... of their faith," the other problem which the CTCR sees as part of the controversy is that "the Gospel is used as the norm of theology in such a way as to suggest that considerable freedom should be allowed within the church in matters which are not an explicit part of the Gospel. This view is sometimes criticized as 'minimalistic' or 'Gospel reductionism.'"

A good example of what appears to be Gospel reductionism, is found in the February 1973 Valparaiso Cresset in which Professor Walter E. Keller, chairman of the Department of Theology says: "I cannot say that the distinction between Law and the Gospel will answer the question as to whether Adam and Eve were historical, but that distinction re-

leases me from the burden of having to say that Adam and Eve must have been historical. They may have been; from the viewpoint of the distinction between the Law and the Gospel the question of their historicity is an indifferent matter." A casual reading of recent statements emanating from the St. Louis Seminary faculty majority, (eg., Faithful To Our Lord: Faithful to Our Calling) reveals this same indifference toward the historicity or happenedness of the Biblical narratives.

Gospel At Stake

The conservatives in synod reject the ideas that inerrancy is the basis or motivation for faith and that the Gospel is the only important element in a Biblical passage. Instead, the conservative agrees with President Preus in his Brother to Brother memo of February 11, 1970: "Make no mistake about this, brothers. What is at stake is not only inerrancy, but the Gospel of Jesus Christ itself, the authority of Holy Scripture, the (quia) subscription to the Lutheran Confessions (adhere to the Confessions not in so far as quatenus they agree with Scripture but because quia they agree with Scripture), and perhaps the very continued existence of Lutheranism as a confessional and confessing movement in the Christian world."

The CTCR report, Gospel and Scripture, agrees with President Preus in rejecting the "idea that the Gospel serves as a core to which other teachings of the Bible are related as a mere set of deductions relative to that particular time and culture. Lutheran theology does not appeal to the Gospel in such a way as to relativize the rest of the Scriptures. Gospel is not norm in the Scriptures in such a way as to make only the Gospel the norm of theology. This is a 'Gospel reductionism' that Lutherans condemn as a repudiation of the authority of the Scriptures."

In summary, the conservative disagrees with the neoliberal principle that once you have the Gospel message, all else is allowed to be interpreted with the historical-critical method even if it disagrees with Scripture's own clear literal understanding of the accounts. And the conservative also disagrees with the neoliberal understanding of what the conservative believes; namely, that to deny the historicity of the Scriptural accounts is terrible because it destroys the basis of our faith--inerrancy. The conservative instead believes that to deny the historicity or happenedness of the event as described by clear Scriptural passages is repugnant because the Gospel itself is at stake.

Faith Founded On Gospel

In a Lutheran Witness article of January 26, 1973, President Preus disagreed with the neoliberal understanding that conservatives are more interested in inerrancy than in the Gospel, that they are not biblical but rather, they are biblicistic. President Preus affirmed the following statements as biblicistic but then disagreed that conservative Lutherans accept them: "The Gospel is true because it is in the Bible; Faith in the Gospel rests on the conviction that whatever the Bible says is true; The authority of the Bible is the doctrine on which the church stands or falls." In a specific rejection of neoliberal ideas of what conservatives supposedly believe, Dr. Preus stated that "faith in the Gospel is not a by-product of or a derivative from a prior view of the Bible. Lutherans believe the Bible because we believe the Gospel; it is not Lutheran to say that we believe the Gospel because we believe the Bible. Saving faith is founded squarely on the Gospel, not on the inerrancy of the Scriptures."

The conservative is not insisting on the happen- edness of the Scriptural narrative in order to uphold some predetermined concept of inerrancy; the conservative does so, instead, to uphold the truthfulness and reliability of the Gospel message. To the neoliberal, then, the conservative asks the question: "If you allow for the denial of the historicity of Adam and Eve, what is there to stop you from denying the historicity of Christ's resurrection?"

III NEOLIBERAL BASIS FOR THE HISTORICAL - CRITICAL METHOD

A. BOUNDED BY THE CONFESSIONS

What hinders the Lutheran neoliberal from denying even the historicity of the cross and resurrection? Neoliberal answer: the Confessions of the Lutheran Church. On April 24, 1972, neoliberal Dr. Bertwin Frey asks and answers that same question: "But if Lutherans question the historicity of the Jonah account, what is to keep them from questioning the historicalness of Jesus' resurrection and other events basic to our faith? The answer: the clear statements of the Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions. To challenge the historicity of the incarnation, the Crucifixion, the Resurrection and the Ascension is to violate the Confessions and become unLutheran."

Gospel Norm Enough

In the neoliberal document Declaration of Determination, Pastor Frey agreed that "differences do exist. These differences are mainly about administrative methods and procedures and the interpretation and authorship of some sections of the Bible. They are not divisive of our fellowship in the Gospel. Together the pastors and teachers of our Synod have pledged themselves to the Bible and its doctrine of the Gospel as interpreted by the Lutheran Confessions. And that's enough!" Here Pastor Frey makes it very clear that for the neoliberals, different interpretations concerning the historicity of Jonah, and other sections of Scripture dealing with clear passages speaking of historical occurrences, even if such interpretations contradict one another, should be allowed because of the pledge to bind ourselves to the Confessions. What is necessary to understand here is the neoliberal view of what is meant by being "bound by the Confessions." Because that view stands in stark contrast to the conservative point of view.

Neoliberal Dr. Robert Bertram, of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, in a 1972 lecture to the Board of Control, said that "the Scripture's inner regulator is the same as that of the Confessions, the essential proclamation of the Gospel: That Jesus Christ our God and Lord was put to death for our trespasses and raised again for our justification." What then, is meant by being bound by the Confessions is being bound by the Confessional statements concerning the Gospel.

On November 4, 1965, neoliberal Pastor Richard Hoffmann told two other pastors that "he holds first to the Confessions, then the Bible. In fact, it's hard to be sure about some things in the Bible and so we have to hold mainly to the Confessions." For the neoliberal, the Confessions--or other of man's writings--can become the norm for agreeing or disagreeing with clear sections of Scriptures. This was not the orthodox position in the 16th Century nor in the 20th. Man's writings--whether Confessions or synodical doctrinal statements--can be accepted or affirmed only quia (because) they agree with Scripture.

Bound By Intention

It is important to realize that bounded by Confessions, does not mean bound by whatever the Confessions say. It means bounded by the intention of the Confessions. In May 1969, neoliberal Pastor Richard Neuhaus stated in the neoliberal Lutheran Forum: "The ordination rite of the Lutheran Agenda has as its chief requirement 'loyalty to the intention of the Confessional writings.' And that intention is admirably clear in the Book of Concord [the Con-

fessional writings] to hold the Catholic faith in its fullness."

Although even Lutheran conservatives have never bound themselves to specific exegesis of Biblical passages as found in the Confessions, the neoliberals have taken this principle one step forward, or backward, as the case may be. Not only do the neoliberals feel unbound by the exegesis of the Confessions, they also feel not bound by any statements in the Confessions which are not directly related to the message of the Gospel.

Intention Vs. Happenedness

In his Scripture interpretation the neoliberal makes a distinction between the Gospel intention of the passages and the historicity (happenedness) of the events being described. Also, in the neoliberal understanding of the Confessions a distinction is made between the doctrine and the theology of the Confessions. "Doctrine" is defined as that which speaks specifically of the Gospel while the "theology" of the Confessions includes statements based on now outmoded thought patterns of a former day. Theology did express well the Gospel message for a former day but becomes deficient or even in error for our day.

Thus, it is no surprise to discover that neoliberals are bound to the Confessions' doctrine but not their theology. The problem is that some neoliberals believe that when the Confessions clearly speak of the historicity of Adam and Eve, the teachings of the Two Kingdoms (Church and State), and other various teachings which have always been regarded as doctrine, such statements should be considered as mere theology. Therefore, the neoliberal is not bound by those teachings. The recent January 1973 CTM editorial by Herbert Mayer supports that contention: "The doctrinal position of the synod is that of Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions, and that foundation has not changed. What has changed is various theological interpretations of both Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions." This quotation makes it clear that for the neoliberals, some of what the LCMS once held as doctrine, is now to be regarded as theology.

An excellent summary of these points is found in the April 1973 Lutheran Witness. President Preus says the following:

It is most certainly true that Christ addresses us with great power and authority in the Scripture with both Law and Gospel and causes us to believe and accept the Gospel for our forgiveness and salvation. This is

what our theologians have called the causative authority of Scripture.

The confessions of our church and our synodical constitution (Art. II) also speak of the Scriptures as the 'rule and norm,' the authoritative standard, for our faith and life. The Scriptures are the Word of God, and because they are inspired by God, they are a faithful witness to His will and grace.

Because Scripture is inspired, it is also true and without error in all matters with which it deals. It is really quite impossible to speak of Scripture as our only norm, as our confessions do, without asserting the inerrancy of Scripture. An erring norm is not a norm.

The Scriptures are the norm for what we are to believe and teach about God, Christ, the Holy Spirit, forgiveness of sins, heaven and hell, the sacraments, the church, and all other articles or doctrines of the Christian faith. They are also the norm for our life and our conduct, as well as for the orders that have been established for the peaceful and happy conduct of our lives under God and with one another in this world.

On the basis of this norm we order the relationships between husband and wife, parents and children, and people in society. The Scriptures provide a norm for our position on war, race, abortion, poverty, divorce, homosexuality, church fellowship, etc.

The belief and practice of our church body on all these matters is based not on the norm of social custom or practice but on the norm of God's inspired, inerrant Word. And this is what we call the normative authority of Scripture.

To reject the normative authority of Scripture or to subordinate it to the point of saying that only the Gospel or the causative authority of Scripture is the norm for our doctrine and life is not only poor theology, and confused theology, but downright false doctrine—contrary to Scripture itself (2 Tim. 3:16) to our Lutheran confessions (Formula of Concord, S. D., Tappert p. 505; Smalcald Articles, Tappert, p. 295, and our constitution (Art. II).

It is a terrible confusion of Law and Gospel to make the Gospel rather than Scripture the norm or rule of doctrine and life. This is one reason why the statement of the faculty

in 'Faithful to Our Calling' (Part 1), p. 21, is so misleading in stating: The Gospel gives the Scriptures their normative character.'

The challenge to the normative authority of Scripture is one of the great doctrinal problems facing our church and all churches today. If we do not settle this properly, we will have doctrinal chaos and confusion.

A subordination or limitation of the normative authority of Scripture to its Gospel content or function is what we call 'Gospel reductionism.' By this we mean a reducing of all doctrine to the one doctrine of the Gospel and making the Gospel (often undefined) the only norm for all doctrine and life.

Our confessions, our synodical constitution, and orthodox Christianity of all ages have recognized Scripture as the norm, not the Gospel. In making the Gospel the norm, 'Gospel reductionism' minimizes the significance of all other matters touched on in Scripture, not only of history, geography, and nature but also of such important matters as the orders of creation and other expressions of God's will for what we are to believe and do. This not only truncates or reduces Biblical authority to Gospel authority but tends to turn Gospel into Law. In effect, it gives us only part of the Scriptures. It reduces what our Catechism calls the two main doctrines of the Bible, Law and Gospel, to one doctrine, namely, the Gospel.

Some people will say that it is legalism, fundamentalism, and a denial of the Gospel to criticize such 'Gospel reductionism.' But in asserting this The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod is standing with Pieper, Walther, Luther, the confessions, and, above all, Scripture itself. All of these witnesses emphasize the centrality of the Gospel, but the Gospel imbedded in 'the whole counsel of God' and proclaimed on the basis of a Scripture that is the only norm for faith and life. This is one of the main points at issue among us today in Synod. A correct understanding of this matter will go far in settling our differences in a God-pleasing and prayerful way.

Our Missouri Synod forefathers were careful in making sure that one subscribed to the Confessions not in so far as they agreed with Scripture but because they agreed with Scripture. The neoliberals, however, agree with both Scriptures and the Confessions only in so far as either uphold, explain,

or emphasize the Gospel message. Everything else is allowed to be affirmed, denied, ignored, or thought of as unimportant so long as the Gospel is emphasized. It is interesting to note that the Confessions were written with an understanding of Scripture which completely is in contradiction to the historical-critical method of interpreting Scripture. On January 30, 1972, I wrote to one pastor: "The sixteenth century confessions were based on a method of interpreting Scripture that presumed Scripture to be inerrant and that 'Scripture interprets Scripture.' To think that pastors who have been taught the contrary will continue to hold to the Confessions, is to be quite naive." That statement is based on four years of experience among students at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis.

B FREEDOM IN THE GOSPEL

The historical-critical method of interpretation is used by the neoliberals because of, as they put it, their "freedom in the Gospel." In a letter to his congregation, neoliberal Pastor George Loose, Chairman of the Board of Control, St. Louis Seminary, said that the whole controversy concerning the St. Louis Seminary "involved the freedom of the Gospel. This is what the Reformation is all about. Luther and his fellow reformers refused to submit their conscience to the Pope. Today we are again being threatened by papistic tendencies. Pray that we may be strong to resist all attempt to centralize power and take away our freedom in the Gospel."

A similar trend of thought was echoed by neoliberal Michigan contact man, Pastor Raymond Moelter, in preparation for the 1972 Michigan District Convention. Writing to men in the district, asking them to support the neoliberal cause Rev. Moelter added: "It would mean that you would be willing to stick out your neck somewhat for the cause of Gospel-Freedom in our midst. This would be in contrast to the legalistic and fundamentalistic thrust of our present Synodical administration." "The neoliberal considers anyone a legalist who insists on upholding the historicity of Biblical accounts or who refuses to regard part of the Confessions' doctrine as theology. To allow for the denial of some of the historicity of the Scriptures and to regard some of the Confessional doctrines as "theology" is to utilize your "freedom in the Gospel," contends the neoliberal.

Freedom or License

After reading a letter which the 1972 graduating class sent to the faculty in appreciation of its teach-

ing and guidance, Dr. Martin Scharlemann wrote the following in the student publication Spectrum: (The student letter) "contained all kinds of pleasant things in the best traditions of public relations. All the cliches were there, including the one about 'freedom of (under) the Gospel.' This one I'd like to pick up for a moment, because it seems to be used around the Seminary to mean that we need no longer respect and do God's law. In fact, sometimes it seems to signify 'license to do one's own thing.' Such notions, of course, are contrary both to Scripture and to the Confessions.... the letter from the fourth-year class to the faculty does not deal with what is rather fundamental in any Christian life: repentance for corruption that is destroying the integrity of Concordia Seminary; and that is not going to be remedied by any pious cliches."

It is interesting to note that although the neo-liberals do not affirm the domino theory (that when one denies one part of Scripture, the Gospel itself is placed in jeopardy of being denied), they still do have a kind of domino theory. They say that one

can deny the happenedness of certain Biblical events without destroying the Gospel. Also one dare not regard such historicity as part of the "doctrine" of the Bible. Yet there are other areas of life or teaching crucial to the Gospel and doctrine."

One such area is 'Procedure.' President Tietjen recently wrote: "We [the neoliberal faculty majority] have been faulted for our insistence on following proper procedure, as though we're only interested in procedure and not doctrine. But the procedural issue is a doctrinal issue. It has to do with our understanding of the nature of the church and of the Gospel and with our relationships with one another in the fellowship of the church." Surely conservatives would agree with President Tietjen's frank admission that the domino theory can easily apply to "procedure." What surprises the conservatives is the blindness of Dr. Tietjen as well as other neoliberals in not recognizing a question of the historicity of Scripture as being not only a "doctrinal issue," but also a question dealing with one's understanding of the Gospel.

CHAPTER 3

DEFINITIONS

A casual reading of what has been written from the neoliberal historical-critical point of view will lead to the conclusion that terms are no longer defined by the conservative and neoliberal in the same way. In fact, as conservative Richard Korthals, former professor at Concordia Junior College, Ann Arbor, pointed out, the neoliberals have "the same bottles but different contents." In other words, they often use the same terms, but mean something entirely different by these terms than what has been thought for the past 125 years.

In 1923 Dr. J. G. Machen, in his book Christianity and Liberalism, charged "the liberals of his day with dishonesty for loading old terms with new meanings without informing their hearers, thus deluding them concerning what they are saying." A similar kind of charge against LCMS neoliberals has come from Mr. Laurence Marquardt, on November 20, 1969, former member of the Board of Control of Concordia, River Forest. Speaking at Springfield Seminary, he contrasted the neoliberal Methodist with the neoliberal Lutheran: "The

Methodist will openly deny Scripture, openly deny inerrancy, make no bones about it. He has a basic honesty about it. Not so with the Lutheran. He will use the same terms like inerrancy, etc. to shield his unbelief while he will have diametrically opposed meanings to these terms. From my point of view this is plain dishonesty." It becomes necessary then, to examine the definition of various terms used by the neoliberals in order to make clear their variance from traditional Lutheran teachings.

I POLARIZATION, FREEDOM, DIVERSITY

Polarization

For the conservative, a state of polarization exists when two sides are so diametrically opposed to each other that correction and change of teaching or doctrinal position needs to occur before reconciliation can take place. The neoliberal realizes that much of the polarization in the synod has

taken place on account of the theological differences centering in the use of the historical-critical method. In his Declaration of Determination, neoliberal Dr. Frey admits that "some polarization has taken place within our Synod, and differences do exist... We can live with these differences and, under the Spirit's leading, resolve them in due time." It is important to realize that Pastor Frey is not asking that the differences be abolished; rather, that each side in the polarization recognize and allow for the other's point of view. This allowance introduces another mutually-exclusive concept such as Lutheran presupposition vs. historical-critical methodology. Dr. Frey can recognize the "other's point of view" only if the "other view" is not conservative. Neoliberalism can live with any religious concept that is mutually inclusive. But orthodoxy is an exclusive doctrine which accepts only (and all of) Scripture as the norm of faith.

Professor William J. Danker, who wrote the Concordia Tract, Your Polarization Is Showing, states that "it is demonic to absolutize our own gift in the body of Christ--whether that is concern for speaking in tongues or concern for our own version of 'pure' doctrine, or our own recipe for social reform." Here again the neoliberal cry for diversity in doctrine reveals that polarization in and of itself is not necessarily a bad thing.

Freedom Of The Gospel

If such an interpretation of the neoliberal point view seems too harsh, let us recall the historical-critical Lutheran interpreter who pleads for a "freedom in the gospel." This can be translated into "a diversity of contradictory interpretations being allowed in the understanding of clear Biblical passages." We recall neoliberal Loose's statement that the issue at the seminary is one of "the freedom of the Gospel." Concordia Theological Monthly editor, Professor Herbert Mayer, once wrote that "evangelical loyalty begins inside the person, where the Spirit of Jesus Christ dwells. This indwelling presence operates as a powerful elastic, both granting to the individual all freedom of theological and ecclesiastical movement that Christ died to gain for him..." (Underlining mine.)

That this freedom of the Gospel has led to neoliberal teachings opposed by conservatives is well shown in a sermon given by Professor Arlis Ehlen on January 7, 1972: "I recognize my calling and appointment to draw even the source criticism of the Red Sea or the form criticism of the Jonah story into the illuminating orbit of the Gospel. And I know that by this continual proclamation of God's covenant of promise, the bondage of ignorance and

legalism is being diminished and the zone of freedom is ever widening." For Professor Ehlen this "zone of freedom" includes the allowable option of denying those passages of Scripture which, for instance, give clear historical documentation for the specific way in which God redeemed his people from the Red Sea.

Diversity

Already back in September 1969, President Tietjen referred to this kind of diversity: "Even the radical elements should not disturb the church unduly, because there needs to be a diversity of viewpoints, even conflicts of viewpoints." In contrast to the conservative who opposes diversity in areas of interpretation where Scripture has made clear its intention, the neoliberal instead seems to relish and enjoy the thought of diversity because of his "freedom" in the Gospel. At times, President Tietjen seems to think that just the statement that there needs to be variety is self explanatory. But one student publicly criticized Dr. Tietjen's article titled, The Gospel and the Theological Task in Freedom to Serve written in 1969. Student Gil Meilander wrote in the October 1969 Seminar: "We are left with only the hint that within the unity of the church there is room, 'lots of it,' for variety. It is unfortunate that the article is of little help in carrying the discussion any farther than that statement itself."

Of course, this neoliberal concept of "freedom" has become part of the thought patterns of many students. Complaining that what appears in student publications is soon spread all over the synod by means of conservative publications, neoliberal Jerry Kosburg wrote on February 22, 1972: "Each time an editor or a writer of a letter to the editor sits down to express his opinion he must face this situation. My only hope is that our freedom will not be restricted by this 'behind the back' activity. This freedom of expression is essential if this community is to be a place of growth in the Lord." But from the conservative student point of view, if a person is not willing to have his words examined before the whole world, let alone the synod, which is paying for much of his education, then he would be better off if he did not speak at all. To say that lack of criticism is essential for growth in the Lord is asking for a life-style which contradicts true growth and maturity.

The conservative not only has a different definition for "polarization" but also understands freedom under the gospel and diversity in a different sense. The conservative understands freedom under the Gospel to be a freedom from the curse

and threats of the Law, not a freedom to interpret clear passages of Scripture as one pleases according to the historical-critical method. Also, the conservative allows for diversity of interpretation only in those passages which are unclear. But he repudiates a diversity of interpretation in those passages which are clear and do not disagree with the plain sense of passages in other parts of Scripture.

One of the strongest denunciations of neoliberal LCMS historical-critical theology has come from a leader of the Evangelical Lutheran Free Church of Germany. Dr. William M. Oesch's letter of August 25, 1971, not only demonstrates his disdain and strong rejection of LCMS neoliberal theology, but also proves the conservative contention that such theology wracks havoc in the mission field: "...our church in Germany is in a state of protest against your Synod. In reality you are already two church bodies, those who want to correct false doctrine...and those who are tolerating such liberal doctrine and practice as violates your own constitution...Diversity is the cry of the one 'synod' and confessional integrity and true doctrine is the maxim of the other 'synod'--eternal consequences are at stake in the outcome....I would say that Dr. Kretzmann's [neoliberal Martin Luther Kretzmann of the staff of the Board for Missions], discounting of some doctrine as relics faces us with last stage heresy; it is selling down the river all restrictions that limit fellowship on the basis of the true identifying marks of the One Church of Christ...In the last analysis one must say they [neoliberals on the Board for Missions] are abdicating the missions in heathen lands, with his kind of theology, to Satan." Certainly, the conservative voice here rings loud and clear against the neoliberal definitions of polarization, freedom of the gospel and diversity.

II INSPIRATION AND INERRANCY

Sermons Inspired

Although there has been some discussion of this topic, it is well to place it in perspective of our concern that neoliberals are using similar terms but with meanings quite different from those as understood in the Synod for 125 years. It is interesting to note that while some neoliberals are using the new definitions, other have not yet caught on. In 1960, for instance, one St. Louis professor, now of the neoliberal faculty majority, wrote a pastor in Minnesota, saying that "since the days of the evangelist John, no man has rightly claimed divine

inspiration." This stands in marked contrast to what his fellow neoliberal professor, Everett Kalin said to a group of future nuns at the then Roman Catholic Webster College on November 13, 1967: "For if we take seriously the thinking of the early church about inspiration, we see that the Holy Spirit was at work not only in Mark's writing but also in that process by which the Christians before him, many of them no longer known to us by name, received, reinterpreted, and handed on these words....So also the church today, inspired by the same Holy Spirit who spoke through Paul or the author of the Gospel of Matthew, reinterprets boldly the good news about God's action in Jesus Christ our Lord. Christ's community also in this time is part of the inspired tradition, for it receives, reinterprets and passes on the living word of the Spirit who never stops leading into all the truth."

Though Prof. Kalin's statement stands in contradiction to the synod's view of inspiration, his neoliberal conclusions have led students, at the seminary, to believe that their sermons are as inspired as the Gospel of John. In 1966 Professor Walter Bouman, of River Forest, told his class that he believed in verbal inspiration. But as one student writes: "However, he explained when you or I proclaim Law and Gospel we are inspired by God in the same manner in which the holy writers of Scripture were inspired." Not only do these statements on inspiration reject the synod's definition of "inspiration," but they are also strongly condemned by conservative theologians everywhere.

In January 1972 Pastor Harry A. Huth wrote: When theologians deny that the Sacred Scriptures, principally by reason of their special inspiration, are to be distinguished from all other writings, then one of two things has happened. Either they have reduced Scripture to mere human writings, or they have elevated mere human writings to the level of Scriptures. In either case, the result is the same. These theologians have no Word of God to speak to the issues of contemporary life.

With these definitions of inspiration students are not surprised to hear professors speak of the Scriptures as a truly human writing or that our sermons are as inspired as are the Scriptures.

Inerrancy

Such a drastic change in the definition of "inspiration" will, of course, have implications for the term inerrancy. To begin with, neoliberal leaders are not ignorant of the fact that they have a different definition of inerrancy. In his Declaration

of Determination, Dr. Frey asks others to "tell our brothers who differ with us on the definition of inerrancy, authorship, and methods of interpretation that these differences are not divisive." Later we shall show that neoliberals consider conservative definitions not only divisive but even unLutheran. At this juncture we are interested to show only that the definitions are different.

In A Layman's Concern About His Church (1967) Mr. Marcus Braun complained that neoliberal professors at Concordia Seminary do not "understand truth to be factual truth as you and I understand truth, but prefer to believe the Scriptures are true in the same sense that Aesop's Fables are 'true' or Greek and Roman mythology are 'true' since they demonstrate certain moral lessons for us to learn." Martin E. Marty, neoliberal spokesman, defines what he means by inerrancy or infallibility: "We agree with the Confessions' use of the term 'infallibility'-the Bible will infallibly guide to salvation in Christ, Savior and Lord." But Marty abuses these confessions. In essence, the neoliberal has changed the definition of inerrancy from one meaning the basic errorlessness and truthfulness of the text in all its parts, including history, to one dealing with the function or purpose of Scripture--that it will do what God wants it to do. It is inerrant in its purposes, but not in its clear meanings.

These definitions are necessary to keep in mind as we read documents either written or signed by neoliberal practitioners. For instance, with these ideas of "inspiration" and "inerrancy" in mind, the 1966 Statement of the St. Louis Seminary faculty to delegates at the New York convention is seen in a different light:

[The faculty said] But we want every member of the Synod, from President Harms to the newest member of the church, to know that every faculty member at your St. Louis Seminary is completely obedient and submissive to every word of the infallible and inspired Word of God. We therefore ask you to be understanding, forgiving and loving, properly distinguishing between doctrinal matters and other theological issues.

Recalling the distinction neoliberal faculty members make between doctrine and theology, also goes a long way in showing that the statement above really does nothing to further reconciliation. In fact, such a statement can be made by a neoliberal who not only denies the facticity of Old Testament accounts of God's working with his people, but also the New Testament accounts of Jesus' miraculous healings, walking on the water, casting out of demons, and much more. To pledge obedience and submissiveness to an inspiration and inerrancy which has lost all the connotations of what the

synod has taught for 125 years is really to make a confession differing from what the synod has made all these years.

In stark contrast to the new neoliberal historical-critical understanding of inerrancy, the doctrinal Theses of the Australian Lutheran Church speak of inerrancy as being impossible to be seen with human eyes, "nor can it be proved through reason; it is an article of faith, a belief in something that is hidden and not obvious.... How in such cases it is possible that differing accounts of the same event or the same saying are the true and inerrant report of one and the same fact cannot and need not always be shown by rational harmonization. We must believe it until 'that which is in part shall be done away' and 'that which is perfect is come.' We reject the attempts of modern religious liberalism [neoliberalism] to make man the judge of the Word of God." Every consistent, honest neoliberal this writer knows rejects this definition of inerrancy.

III LEGALISM

With the neoliberal insistence that freedom of the Gospel centers in the importance only of the Gospel message of Jesus Christ, there is a great amount of hard feeling against any conservative who thinks that insistence on the historicity of a passage is important. In fact, such conservatives are judged as legalists. Since for 125 years synod has rejected the neoliberal theology of the historical-critical method, it is most surprising to hear neoliberal professors speak of the loyal members in the synod as legalists. After receiving a letter from a conservative student, one neoliberal professor answered:

Your [the student's] recent letter was a classic example of what I would call the legalistic approach... your concept, if I have caught you at all correctly, is not peculiar to you; many in the synod hold it and they are, not infrequently, the cause of trouble and dissent as they try to push their friends and colleagues into the box that I have described above.

The "box" was one of insistence on teaching what the Bible clearly states concerning the happenedness or historicity of Biblical accounts in contrast to teaching (according to the historical-critical method) what some theorize might have happened.

Christ Or The Bible

The conservative insistence to hold to the Scriptures as being without error is often ridiculed by the neoliberals as replacing Christ by the Bible. In insisting on the supreme importance of the Gospel over and above any consideration for the his-

toricity of a text, the neoliberal believes that the conservative is more concerned with agreeing with Scripture than with proclaiming the Gospel message. To this accusation of legalism, conservative Pastor Waldo Werning replied at a Concordia Springfield convocation on November 27, 1969:

When we confess God's Word to be the inerrant, infallible written Word in the historical sense, some strongly criticize us of being guilty of bibliolatry or biblicism. Christ and the Bible are not antitheses. Some maintain that those who believe the Bible to be an errorless and infallible source are worshipping the Bible. I haven't yet met a Lutheran pastor who worshipped the Bible. What I am concerned about is not bibliolatry but idolatry --idolizing man's mind and his own notions.

Thus the conservative sees an inseparable relationship between the truthfulness of all parts of Scripture and the certainty of the message of the Gospel.

Gods Word And Love

Another cutting in two which neoliberals accuse conservatives of making is between God's Word and love. In an obvious attempt to insist on love even to the detriment of purity of doctrine, neoliberal spokesman Pastor Bretscher of Valpariso stated on April 17, 1970:

Love does not set up barriers. Love does not rejoice in holding hard lines creating animosities, feeling persecuted. Love becomes all things to all men, even when others might judge it to be indifference and compromise. Love bears all things, even what looks like heresy. Love believes all things.

The conservative views this idea of love as simplistic and unscriptural. Love may bear what looks like heresy, but the conservative is talking not about "what looks like" but "what is!"

That the concept love is used to shame and discourage those interested in pure doctrine is evidenced in a letter from a concerned Wisconsin laywoman of the American Lutheran Church. She wrote:

The word Love is used as a psychological weapon to shame and discourage those who would speak out against false doctrine tolerated and defended within the church. They cry out, 'How loveless,' 'how hateful,' 'how presumptuous,' to dare to doubt and question learned men of the church. . . . But there is no outcry when the liberal and unbelieving professors and leaders of the church attack and malign God's Holy Word, denying many of its basic doctrines. Where here is their love to God, or love for the neighbor who suffers

spiritual harm or even eternal loss?

Martin Luther himself realized that the command to love calls for tolerance only in the area of sin and life but certainly not in the area of false teaching. "The sin against doctrine is worse than those against love. . . . The sin against doctrine is in no wise to be tolerated but we are to have patience with sin against love because by it we sin only against our neighbor without violating doctrine and faith. However, if anything is undertaken against the Word, faith and the honor of God, we are in no wise to preserve silence, and are to bear it far less patiently. Then we should offer stubborn resistance."

IV MODERATE LIBERALS VERSUS ARCH-CONSERVATIVE ULTRA-RIGHT FUNDAMENTALISTS

If the situation were not so serious, one of the most amusing changes of definitions has occurred in those terms directed by neoliberals either to themselves or against the conservatives. The use of the term neoliberal implies not so much the harm of the movement as it does the content of the historical-critical theology even with so-called "Lutheran presuppositions."

Liberal

At times the neoliberal does not mind the term liberal used to define his own theology so long as everyone in the church of any importance can also be understood as liberal. For example, in 1968, former St. Louis seminary President Alfred Fuerbringer took issue with one conservative who used the term liberal in a pejorative sense. Dr. Fuerbringer wrote that his own father "with all his sound conservatism, was also a good liberal, as all who really knew him testified." From all the discussions I have had with men who studied under him and worked with him later it seems that no conservative, then, ever "really knew him." Moreover, Dr. Fuerbringer goes so far as to say that even Martin Luther was a liberal. Once the term can be used to describe Luther himself, one must say that there has been a definite change in the meaning of the term.

Moderate

Another interesting term which the neoliberals like to apply to themselves is moderate. A survey conducted by the seminary showed that most pastors

liked the term moderate but disliked the term fundamentalist. Neoliberals soon began to call themselves moderates, and the conservatives they called fundamentalists, among other things.

The term moderate in a neoliberal meaning is interesting. There are conservatives who like to use the term moderate, only by adapting the Bible verse that God wants a person either hot or cold but if he is 'moderate' He will spew him out of his mouth. Obviously, the neoliberals do not use the term with that connotation. They prefer to think of themselves as supporting and teaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ, yet out of love for one another allowing for diversity in theology and interpretation of Biblical passages. But William Eggers writing in the Badger Lutheran (February 4, 1971) says:

However happy the sound of that label (moderate), it probably includes some who move far beyond the official position of the church--beyond its doctrine of the Word (inerrancy and inspiration), of fellowship, of the ecumenical movement, of the relation of the church to the society in which it finds itself, and other matters.

The idea that moderate infers "toleration" was severely damaged by President Tietjen himself when speaking to a Cincinnati open meeting in 1972. He was denouncing the conservative publication Christian News, for constantly keeping the neoliberals in the spotlight. Dr. Tietjen said that he did not believe anything the editor of Christian News said. He called the newspaper a slander sheet and told the group of largely pro-neoliberal people,

Discount just absolutely everything you read in this publication.... And if you have to read it, well, I really don't think you should.

After hearing the tapes of Dr. Tietjen in which Tietjen said that he has been 'personally maligned in the paper for as long as he [editor Herman Otten] has been publishing,' Cincinnati layman Chet Swanson stated:

This is moderation?... he [Dr. Tietjen] delivered as scathing an attack on an individual as I have heard in many a year. Never have I seen on the pages of Christian News such a blanket slander of anyone.... And yet Tietjen gets laughter and applause for his 'moderation.'

Fundamentalist

The term used more than any other by neoliberals as a label for conservatives is fundamentalist. Already in 1968, when the neoliberals were organizing on political levels to overthrow conservative theology, Dr. O. P. Kretzmann, neoliberal president of Valparaiso University, urged the group

to organize within the synod, "to defend classical [in reality, neoliberal] Lutheranism from the fundamentalist assaults." After the Milwaukee convention, neoliberal Newsweek editor Kenneth L. Woodward wrote that "Lutheran fundamentalists have long suspected that Concordia [Seminary St. Louis] harbors liberal [neoliberal] heretics, and Preus who takes his Scriptures literally, says he wants to find out if rumors about doctrinal deviations are true. The seminary is the church's major source of pastors, and moderates fear a purge led by fundamentalists."

It is interesting to note what Woodward considers to be a fundamentalist. At the end of the article he describes the questions, which the Fact Finding Committee asked the professors, not as Lutheran questions but as fundamentalist questions. "At one point, the scholars were asked whether they believe a man named Matthew actually wrote the Gospel that bears his name. Another questioner wanted to know whether the scholars taught students that homosexuality is a sin or a sickness." The reason Woodward regards these questions as fundamentalistic rather than Lutheran is that consistent and honest neoliberals who use the historical-critical method are not sure who wrote the book of Matthew or whether one need agree with the Scriptural teaching that homosexuality is a sin. I recall, one class in particular discussing how to counsel the homosexual, which was completely wasted since the students could not agree on whether or not homosexuality is still a sin for our day!

That the conservative is a fundamentalist may or may not be true depending on one's definition. Using Woodward's criterion of fundamentalist, the conservative admits he is. But using the traditional meaning of the term, a fundamentalist would be a biblicist as already defined. And this every conservative would reject. In fact in the seminary's own library a book by Dr. Milton Rudnick does conclude that LCMS conservatives are not fundamentalists in the true sense of the term. This is an especially interesting book because the author had assumed that conservatives in the LCMS are indeed fundamentalists. However, his honest and thorough research revealed that this is not the case. Truly a book which every neoliberal should read.

Arch Conservative

Another religious news editor, Episcopalian Lester Kinsolving, influenced by neoliberal former Professor John Elliott and others used to attack specific neoliberal targets, referred to Marcus Braun and John Montgomery (certainly in the conservative group) as archconservatives. To understand

that Kinsolving meant this in a pejorative manner, one only need to read the context of his March 2, 1968, editorial: "If archconservatives like Braun and Montgomery prevail -- or even contend as they have in the past -- the denomination is quite likely to live up to its traditional nickname: The Misery Synod." This "objective" editorial was syndicated and appeared in over 100 newspapers all over America.

Ultra-Rightist

Another term used is ultra-rightist. This term was in wide use among neoliberal political forces prior to the synodical convention in Milwaukee in 1971. William Eggers of the Milwaukee Badger Lutheran commented on the unfortunate use of this term.

And the term ultra-right, in times like ours, carries the worst possible connotation. It is used to mean those who are out of touch with our times, those whom progress has sadly left behind, those who want the cold and dead hand of the past to paralyze the present, those who bury their heads in the sand, and those whose psychological rigidities create defenses against the living realities of the age and the Christ. Now there are people like that: I know some of them personally. But most of the people the liberals [neoliberals] include in this condemnatory generalization, the ultraright, in reality are conservatives. By grace they want to conserve in Christ the theology which has always been and still remains the official position of our church.

Editor Eggers concluded that "definitions themselves are part of the battleground of the contemporary church." In a paraphrase of the Cleveland convention resolution on what is "orthodoxy and doctrine" we state what is the real "definition" of a term: "The orthodox character of a church is established not by its mere name nor by its outward acceptance of, and subscription to, an orthodox term [creed] but by the definition [doctrine] which is actually taught in its pulpits, in its theological seminaries and its publications." In summary the terms we have analyzed are defined differently in the neoliberal pulpit, classroom and publication than in those of the conservative. The problem, therefore, is not only a squabble over definitions, as Dr. Frey would have us believe. Rather, it is one that goes to the basis of our faith. It is a problem concerning the understanding of Biblical authority, confessional commitment and the Gospel message of Jesus Christ.

Summary

In July, 1965, the St. Louis Lutheran thought it "doubtful whether any of us will ever again want to make a case for the myth long believed in certain circles of our church that 'everywhere in our church we thought alike and everyone in our church taught alike.'" It has been our contention in the preceding chapters that this "myth" was fostered by neoliberal seminary administrators and professors. As one example among many, President Alfred Fuerbringer stated on June 8, 1965:

While our men have received some insights from men like Bultmann, they have not embraced the new hermeneutic [the historical-critical method], but operate with the old principles, applying them in terms of recent knowledge gained in the areas of language, cultural relevance and the like.

But many pastors in the field believed that such was not the case at all. On November 1, 1966, one pastor wrote a synodical official:

If only we could get a number of men to testify that the higher critical view is being permitted by some of the professors at the St.

Louis Seminary...

This pastor did not have long to wait. Instead of students testifying to the use of the new historical-critical method at the seminary, the new President of the seminary, Dr. John Tietjen, admitted this fact. In an article dated June 6, 1971, the New York Times stated that Dr. Tietjen, "acknowledged that Concordia professors, like those at most other seminaries, use modern critical methods that do not necessarily conform to strict literalism." His recent demands that every professor must use the historical-critical method in the classroom and that no decent scholarship can be accomplished without it show clearly not so much the change in attitudes towards the method from Dr. Fuerbringer's administration to Dr. Tietjen's, but rather a change towards openness and clarity.

Gradual Acceptance

Even seminary public relations director Robert A. Grunow, who often gave the impression that all was well at the seminary, admitted on November 17, 1967, that one neoliberal Professor, John Elliott, had "moved too rapidly in the teaching profession," and that "he [Grunow] hoped the officials had learned a lesson by not doing this again." His comments, finding objection in a neoliberal article by Professor Glock and a Sunday School book by Professor Malte depicted true feelings of one who outwardly seemed to support all that was going on at the seminary.

In trying to give the impression that his change

to the historical-critical method was not difficult, St. Louis Seminary Professor Herbert Mayer told a meeting at Milwaukee on October 6, 1970, that he "found it easy to accept the higher critical method." But at that very meeting a pastor who had been a student of Professor Mayer just five years before, told others there that Dr. Mayer "went through hell to accept the higher critical method." Another pastor from Washington stated that Mayer told him in 1966 that "he wrestled with this in his conscience for several years but now can accept it peacefully." And this is true of other professors who, called to the seminary because of their conservatism, soon became so enmeshed in the historical-critical method, that they changed over after just a matter of time. Professor Sauer of St. Louis says: "The evidence in support of the method was overwhelming."

Even a new neoliberal publication, Concord, out of Indianapolis, Indiana, wrote in the January, 1973 edition: "The gradual acceptance in the 50's and 60's of the historical-critical method of biblical study at the seminary further exacerbated the situation." That this was a gradual change is shown by the fact that every article prior to 1954 in the CTM opposed the historical-critical method whereas, now in 1973, under the control of Dr. Mayer and other neoliberals at the St. Louis Seminary, the articles not only support the historical-critical method but even demand it.

The previous sections should make clear that statements by neoliberal St. Louis Seminary Professor Edgar Krentz that the "historical-critical method is neutral," or that the debate in our synod "is not a debate between conservatives and liberals, but a debate between conservatives and men who are more conservative Christians" are not tenable. Not only do the differences in presuppositions and assumptions of the method lead to a wide divergence in doctrine between conservatives and neoliberals, but also that neoliberals as Dr. Tietjen and the majority faculty of the St. Louis Seminary regard the conservative position as "unscriptural" and "unlutheran!"

Overseas

Even conservative theologians from overseas have seen the change in the Missouri Synod. One such man, Dr. Herman Sasse wrote that he knew of some old theologians of conservative Lutheran Churches in America who had been pillars of orthodoxy in a long ministry and who shortly before their death lost their former convictions and taught the opposite to what they had been teaching. "Dr. Sasse is speaking from experience. In churches

in his country who now use the historical-critical method there are those pastors who "are teaching young mothers that they should not bring their little children to the sacrament of Baptism." Although I do not know of any professor who questions infant baptism, there certainly are graduates, even in the deaconess calling, who have their doubts about such a use of the Sacrament.

Students

One can imagine the effect which the insistence of this historical-critical method has on most of the students at the seminary. Understanding that the neoliberal assumes that the Bible can be in error, student Ronald W. Roschke, son of one of the neoliberal members of the Board of Control at the seminary, wrote in the Christmas 1971 edition of the Seminar, a student publication:

To the twentieth century reader, Paul's 'liberal' if not 'liberational' statement in Gal. (3: 28) seems to conflict with other statements of Paul which we now want to consider.... We must guard against seeing the New Testament documents as speaking to modern concerns and even 'unconsciously' anticipating present-day social movements.

Disagreeing with the assumption that Paul contradicts himself, I wrote in the student publication of Spectrum on January 19, 1972: "Ron Roschke's article 'Paul on Women' in the latest Seminar only serves as witness to the kind of theoretical, historically-conditioned, philosophically-based theology championed by this Seminary which attempts to interpret Biblical truths to contemporary situations without consideration of the present synodical stance of the LCMS."

Doctrinal Diversity

There really is no need to go further in detailing the results of using the historical-critical method. The Report of the Synodical President to the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, which is the result of the inquiry conducted into the teachings of St. Louis Seminary faculty professors, clearly depicts the divergent positions held by various members of the faculty on pages 26 and following. Not only did the inquiry find differences between the conservative position in synod and the neoliberal position in the areas of inspiration, authority of Scripture, inerrancy, understandings of the relationship between the Bible and the Gospel and the intent of a passage, but also in the use of the historical-critical method in interpreting Scripture.

Since there is no agreement among the neoliberal

professors at the seminary that one insist that a Lutheran professor teach and believe in the virgin birth, the **physical** resurrection of Jesus Christ and the reality of angels and demons, then can one really say that these doctrines are really believed by the neoliberals? In fact, after attending many classes under neoliberal tutelage, the fact of the matter became obvious to me. These teachings, although personally believed by all professors, are held by neoliberal proponents as tentative and theoretical hypotheses which may or may not be true in the future. It is a fact that neoliberal students who question the literal clear interpretations of the biological virgin birth of Jesus Christ, the physical resurrection of Christ from the dead and the existence of personal angels and demons as described by Scripture, are not denied certification for ordination. In reality, then, it is absurd to call neoliberal acceptance of these doctrines as "beliefs;" instead, they are the tentative, theoretical positions held at that time, subject to change and/or modification if in their view the evidence discovered in the future warrants this.

Brutal Or Subtle

Now although some neoliberals have attempted only gradually to demand the necessity of the use of the historical-critical method in our synod, others have not been so careful. Already back in 1967, some were anxious to replace conservative doctrine with neoliberal theories. A teacher describes a lecture he heard in 1967 by Pastor Elmer Witt, an active and eager proponent of the historical-critical method. Pastor Witt was discussing specifics as to how to teach the Word of God to boys and girls of Walther League age: "Elmer said that the first thing that had to be done in the matter of teaching the Word to Walther Leaguers was to root out of them all of the false notions that had been planted in them by their parents, and pastors and teachers. Then, having finished the job, they would have to be told the things that were right, meaning the 'latest findings of modern Biblical scholarship (historical-critical method).' It was this process that Elmer called conversion."

There are, of course, other neoliberals who feel

that such an approach as the above is not only too drastic but too sudden. Back to 1965, when neoliberal teachings were really beginning to stir up conservative pastors, teachers and laity, Dr. Arthur Ahlschwede spoke at the Religion Professors Conference. One source wrote that Ahlschwede admitted that in the past years things had been changing in synod. Scripture is seen as containing "conditional instead of absolute truth." He cautioned the professors that the "membership of synod has not kept up with the scope and pace of these changes." Insisting that there "is no timetable on what we are trying to achieve", he asked the neoliberals that for the time being, "it is expedient that we who teach in synod's schools slow down."

Unlike Pastor Witt's honest and determined approach to the need for changing the synod's method in interpreting Scripture, most other neoliberals agreed with Ahlschwede that openness may not be the best policy. This necessity led to many neoliberals denying what is eagerly admitted today; namely, that the historical-critical method must be used in our synod not only for good scholarship but also for scholarship of any kind whatsoever.

In contrast and in opposition to any neoliberal teachings, whether honestly brutal or subtly evasive, a group of concerned conservative Lutherans in May 1965, under the banner of Faith Forward First Concerns, said the following:

Our synodical institutions, agencies and departments are not tools for crusaders of 'new hermeneutics' [historical-critical methodology] or of unionistic fellowship, but they are God's instruments and the church's proper vehicles to serve the church faithfully for teaching and declaring God's truths. Men employed by a church to equip people for ministry are forced by common decency and honesty to abide by the public doctrine of the church. The church is not our servant, but we are servants of the church--and bound together in Christ through our common confession. This is the way in which our church will go forward in every aspect of its tasks, and the Kingdom through the Gospel will come to men.

PART TWO

THE NEOLIBERAL POLITICAL ORGANIZATION

CHAPTER 4

WOLBRECHT VERSUS "POLITICKING"

Reason for Book

One of the reasons for writing the facts of this book was prompted by the statement made by former executive secretary of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, Pastor Walter F. Wolbrecht, at the synodical convention in Denver, July 1969. The Chicago Sun Times religious editor, Roy Larson wrote, "Dr. [Walter] Wolbrecht, who has held the denomination's top staff position since 1961, made an impassioned speech at the beginning of the convention attacking the conservatives for their methods of 'politicking.'"

Contrary to all neoliberal remarks, contentions and newspaper headlines insisting that the conservatives brought politics into the synod, the real political masters of the synod for a good many years have been the neoliberals. As we have demonstrated in Part I, neoliberals had worked long and hard to get the historical-critical method of interpretation as the accepted method for Biblical interpretation, and with this the theological permissiveness that always ensues. To accomplish this task, there had to be not only a gradual change of doctrine, but more importantly, also a takeover of synodical power, authority, and administration. In fact, the very man who had accused the conservatives of playing politics at the Denver convention, had been personally involved in the creation of an active neoliberal political machine intent on getting its own men into administrative offices, seminary professorships, and key church parishes; in short, the complete takeover of the Missouri-Synod at every level.

Neoliberal Personnel

There are certain persons prominent in the LCMS political machine with Wolbrecht. They are President Alfred Fuerbringer, past president of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis; Pastor Dean

Lueking, of Grace Lutheran Church, River Forest; Pastor Bert Frey, former president of the English District; Pastor Richard Koenig, campus pastor in Amherst, Massachusetts; Dr. Arthur Repp, Vice-President at St. Louis Seminary; Dr. William H. Kohn, former President of the Southeastern District and member of synod's Board of Directors and now Executive Secretary of the Board for Missions; Dr. C. Thomas Spitz, Executive Secretary of LCUSA, and Dr. John Tietjen, President of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis. Although these men have been the leaders of the neoliberal movement for a good number of years, their expertise is not so much in the theological aspects of the controversy as it is in the political machinations of this venture.

With clear reference to Dr. Wolbrecht's statement at Denver, Pastor Lueking was interviewed by the Chicago Daily News on October 14, 1972. Speaking to the election of President J. A. O. Preus over incumbent President Oliver Harms, Pastor Lueking said: "His election was the first time in the 125-year Synod history that an incumbent wasn't re-elected." The article added that it was the first time "that politicking made the difference. The Synod in the last three years has become the most political of churches."

In November, 1970, Pastor Lueking characterized the election of the Rev. Preus, as the work of "a powerfully organized group (Milwaukee Journal, November 7, 1970)." One month before, Pastor Lueking wrote a letter to fellow neoliberals stating, that "it is no secret that a powerfully organized group within the Synod has not abandoned its purposes since bringing about the election of a new Synodical president at Denver a year and one half ago. ... I write these things to you because I have been asked to accept leadership of a group throughout the Synod who feel that events have constrained us to mobilize our convictions appropriately and express them constructively."

After this idea was echoed in neoliberal publications one after another, the conservative layman was hard pressed to refute the idea that conservatives were (a) powerful, (b) highly organized politically, and (c) a minority within the synod. On top of that, any reference to the neoliberal point of view was along the lines of a group of dedicated men, not at all politically organized, simply anxious for the return of the Gospel. These misrepresentations not only led to some support for the neoliberal cause, but, more importantly, led to a great sense of fear, anxiousness and hatred toward the conservatives and especially the present synodical administration.

The purpose of the following section is to demonstrate that the neoliberals are the powerful politically-active minority within the synod who not only have used the basic rudiments of dialogue in attempting to persuade to their point of view, but

have even reacted against conservatives by means of ambiguity, dishonesty, slander, hypocrisy, and censorship in an opportunist manner.

As far back as 1965 a group of eight (8) conservative district presidents complained to the then President Harms that "tens of thousands in the church are offended" at the stance of "an aggressive minority who hold to a theology that is intolerable and is inconsistent with the Scriptures and the Confessions." As one of the District Presidents described the stand which they all were taking:

We are definitely convinced that those who proclaim a hermeneutic or exegesis [historical-critical] foreign to our previous position and in opposition to earnest pleas of the last two Conventions, which pleas were in the form of resolutions passed by overwhelming majorities, are now waging a real offensive for their cause. (emphasis mine)

CHAPTER 5 PRIOR TO DENVER 1969

Specific Evidence

Since neoliberals Dr. Walter Wolbrecht and Pastor Dean Lueking have stated that only the conservatives were "politicking" prior to the Denver convention election of President Preus, it becomes necessary to refute that misrepresentation with specific evidence. In May 1968, Lutheran Forum, the most important neoliberal publication, except possibly for the Concordia Theological Monthly of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis reported that a "movement to organize support for the administration of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod [President Harms, and executive director Dr. Wolbrecht] has received impetus from meetings held recently in various areas of the church body." What better evidence that neoliberal political machinery already was being put into motion one full year before the Denver Convention.

The same edition of Forum, May 1968, reports on what neoliberal Valparaiso University President O. P. Kretzmann said at the neoliberal meeting for the New York-New Jersey-New England regions. He urged "the need to organize a group within the Synod to defend classical Lutheranism from the fundamentalist assaults." After his talk to get neoliberal political groups active throughout synod, the Forum reports that "in discussion groups and closing plenary sessions participants in the Stamford conference agreed on the need to consider organization on all levels of church activity

undergirded by prayer and money.... A suitable publication program will also be studied. A continuation committee to make contact with similar groups in other areas of the LCMS and to plan for carrying out the concerns identified at the meeting was also authorized."

Here clearly out of the mouth of the main neoliberal publication comes ample proof that political action was underway one full year before the Denver Convention. Of course, it should be realized that the meetings on which the Forum reported had been planned and organized well in advance. In fact, from a conservative pastor in St. Louis writing to an official of synod, we learn that prior to April 1965 President Fuerbringer had told the student body that there "will be a meeting in River Forest early in May." At that same time, meetings were already being held in Pastor Dean Lueking's church in River Forest. And this was in 1965, a full four years prior to the Denver convention.

California - Nevada Meeting

It would take a book of twice this length simply to summarize the neoliberal meetings prior to Denver which had as their goal both the political and doctrinal takeover of the Missouri-Synod. Lest anyone suppose that there is no such evidence, we summarize in detail only the activities of meetings

held in the California and Nevada districts which attempted politically to control doctrine, administrative offices and especially the convention in Denver.

On January 17, 1968 twenty-eight neoliberals were sent information concerning "possible memorials to California and Nevada District Convention and Synodical Convention in Denver." All the men contacted were reminded of the neoliberal meeting the previous September 1967, where neoliberal professor Robert Bertram reflected "on how we could take action which might help lead Missouri in the direction of a more relevant ministry in our age."

The neoliberals were told that "the deadline for memorials to our own convention is January 31st [1968]. Therefore it would be good for us to get together to study the memorials that have been developed by the men as suggested after our last meeting as well as any memorials that any of us might feel it necessary to present." (emphasis mine) Because of the necessity to plan strategy, the neoliberal contact men were asked to attend a meeting on January 30th at Trinity Lutheran Church, Burlingame. At this meeting certain committees would report on their work. Yes, committees even in 1968 were hard at work planning neoliberal strategy and future action.

It is interesting to note not only the designation of the committees, but more importantly, the neoliberals heading each committee-- On "Lutheran Church involvement (Huchthausen and Kramer), Social Action (Grumm and Herzfeld), Ecumenical Involvement (Ralph Moellering), and Theological Concerns (Elliott, Grumm, and Pfotenhauer)."

Some of the memorials which were being considered included "pulpit and altar fellowship with LCA as well as ALC. . . because we both accept Holy Scriptures and the Augsburg Confession," the idea of "encouraging congregations to join [with the ALC or LCA] even before the national body takes organizational action, to take membership immediately in the National Council of Churches and the World Council of Churches," and a memorial in the theological arena "to establish a policy with regard to theological memorials that are covered in our Lutheran Confessions to be answered not by special resolutions and new statements, but rather by referring to the appropriate article in our Lutheran Confessions." This last one clearly shows the historical-critical bent which this neoliberal group had. Today the California and Nevada District has turned into one of the most neoliberal districts of the synod under neoliberal President Paul Jacobs.

Now these kinds of meetings occurred around the country in the year prior to Denver. No one wants to deny that the conservatives were meeting also. But one would be hard pressed to come up with the kind of detailed agendas, committees, and contact men spread throughout the synod in the conservative group as there were in the neoliberal.

Neoliberal Openness

What is even more odd in the face of the neoliberal assertions that the conservatives are the ones who began 'politicking' in the synod is the number of statements by neoliberals themselves admitting to out-and-out political activity. We have already examined Richard Koenig's Forum of May 1968. To give just one indication as to how long these neoliberals had been meeting, we can go back to a statement made by a neoliberal missionary in 1959.

He had been a missionary to the Philippines but resigned from the Missouri Synod and joined the Lutheran Church in America. As one LCMS pastor tells it:

Already in 1959 [this missionary stated] that his only mistake was that he was five years premature with his theological emphasis in the Missouri Synod. He had been meeting with prominent liberals in the Chicago area (Martin Marty, Roland Seboldt, Jaroslav Pelikan, Dean Lueking) who disagreed with the Synod's theological position and apparently were already at that time plotting their strategy for the future.

Their "strategy" became so obvious in some areas, that even secular newspapers realized that conservatives and neoliberals--or progressives as they were known then--had been fighting and politicking against one another before Denver. David A. Runge of the Milwaukee Journal wrote the following on June 21, 1969, a month before the Denver convention:

The progressive side [neoliberals] has been victorious in two preconvention contests. In one, the Rev. John Tietjen, executive secretary of the public relations division of the Lutheran Council in the USA, recently was named president of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis. In the other case the Council of District Presidents recommended a formal declaration of fellowship with the American Lutheran Church.

Here Mr. Runge has realized something which Dr. Wolbrecht and Pastor Lueking felt they needed to deny, that already quite a bit of time before President Preus' election at Denver, neoliberal

forces were actively at work throughout the synod planning, laying strategy, and executing well-laid plans which, in some cases, led to "victories."

For additional proof one need not look any further than a neoliberal professor at Valparaiso University, John Strietelmeier. In the paper Cresset, Professor Strietelmeier admits that "for something like 25 years prior to 1969, the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod was controlled by a coalition of Liberals and Moderates. . . . These years of Liberal ascendancy ended suddenly and decisively at the Synodical convention in Denver in the summer of 1969. . . . Having come to power, the Conservative power did what the Liberals had done a generation before. They consolidated their power and began to divide the spoils." This raises serious questions about the nature of political activity during all those past years, during which the neoliberals had everything their way, so that there was no need for political machinery. The conservatives naively trusted their brethren.

This honest and forthright statement from a neoliberal flies in the face of all of what most other neoliberals have been saying--that prior to Denver, there was no political activity in the church except on the part of conservatives. Yet Dr. Strietelmeier shares with his fellow neoliberals "a feeling of resentment that what our party might justifiably consider its best gift to the church--the Seminary in its present form--should now be under attack from men who, we suspect, have no idea of the amount of labor and dedication that went into the building of that place. . . ." A frank admission indeed that neoliberals had been working long and hard to get the kind of theological climate at the seminary which they so desired, and that they had achieved their goal! Frankly, one can imagine that neoliberals would be upset over the prospect of the seminary returning to conservative leadership.

Even more revealing is Dr. Strietelmeier's frank admission that the neoliberal task "forming a loyal opposition, is not, therefore, to condemn them [the conservatives] but to oppose them." In contrast to most neoliberals, Dr. Strietelmeier says that he expects "the Conservatives to act as conservatives; indeed I would feel that they had deceived the church if they did not. . . . What I do not share with my fellow Liberals is the feeling that there is anything evil or underhanded in the move against the Seminary."

These frank, honest, and bold admissions by a neoliberal who ought to know brings both despair and encouragement to the conservative. Despair

because the worst fears are realized-- For years neoliberals have been "politicking" and laying the foundation and building the structure to seize control of the administrative offices of synod and seminary and thereby to change the theology of the synod from conservative to neoliberal. The conservatives find encouragement here because they can point to Dr. Strietelmeier's honest editorial to end all the nonsense from other neoliberals concerning the "politicking" conservatives, in contrast to the "Gospel-oriented" neoliberals.

Conservative Reaction

One conservative layman, Chet Swanson, wrote to Dr. Strietelmeier:

Since I am in the conservative camp, I suppose I should be concerned over your honest, loving and refreshing witness. For you are much more likely to regain control of LCMS [which you felt the liberal-moderate coalition had exercised for 25 years] by this tactic than by the stream of invective and innuendos flowing from the pens of so many of your ideological brothers.

We do not desire to give the impression that persons within synod attempting to convince others that synod should move one way or another is undesirable. We have had these political movements from the time of Peter and Paul. We also are not saying that neoliberals have been political but conservatives have not. Indeed, conservatives also have met together to discuss what memorial to send to conventions, which delegates would best represent a circuit, etc.

But what we are indeed saying is that the neoliberals are incorrect when they claim that Denver 1969, was the beginning of "politicking" in the synod because of what the conservatives had done. No, indeed, "politicking" by neoliberals is amply documented years before the conservatives in this synod truly realized how far the neoliberals had gained control over the synodical structure. Obviously, in a counter-reaction during these years, following 1969, the conservatives stirred up much anger and resentment among many of the neoliberals because their easy won victories were being placed into jeopardy, and now their neoliberal plans were being challenged.

Furthermore, it should be noted that conservative political machinery falls far short of the complex, intricate and communicative machinery of the neoliberals.

CHAPTER 6

THE STAMFORD COALITION

One of the centers of neoliberal activity is the East Coast of the United States. Because of the neoliberal attitudes of district presidents in that area, many of the neoliberals have met for many years in closed meetings, planning strategy and deciding their next moves.

Reorganizing

After the tremendous impact the election of conservative President Preus had on the hopes and plans of neoliberals within the synod, some reorganization occurred. On April 3, 1970, the Stamford Study Group reorganized itself. Its new executive committee consisted of Pastors William Weber and Arthur Lesslie. The layman on the committee was Robert Madigan from Connecticut, who would be a major figure in future neoliberal strategy plannings, especially providing nationwide publicity slanted for neoliberals and against conservatives. It is interesting to note that at the meeting of April 3, Richard Koenig, editor of Missouri-Free, United, Evangelical, the forerunner of Forum, gave a paper. The group also endorsed a neoliberal position paper entitled, A Call to Openness and Trust.

Immediately this coalition began organizing in various areas groups of dedicated neoliberal proponents of the historical-critical method to oppose the conservative voice. Letters were sent out to likely prospects asking that they "send us the names of five, ten, or more laymen and laywomen in your

church who you feel should be aware of the situation in the Synod."

The vocal neoliberal layman on the executive committee, Robert Madigan, was not too pleased with the neoliberal stance of keeping quiet as much as possible concerning the changes which were occurring in the synod. In September 1970, he wrote neoliberal leaders telling them to "quit" "whispering campaigning," get out into all areas and tell it like it is." He also felt that the idea of asking pastors for names of neoliberals within their congregation was too slow. So he wrote that the neoliberal leaders should "obtain full mailing list of Missouri Synod pastors and teachers. If Preus [President Preus] won't give it, Madigan of New York knows how to get it." One of his most insistent refrains was the need for the neoliberals to create a "formal physical structure above all. Then you must have a layman take the lead in exposing Preus for what he is. If no one from Middle State is available, I'll do it." This is the same Robert Madigan that will be a delegate to the New Orleans convention.

During the coming years the Stamford Coalition would do much to spread the neoliberal point of view through publications, meetings, and strategy planning. For example, in December 1970, it was the Stamford group which obtained more than a thousand copies of a speech by President Tietjen to distribute nationwide. Another recommendation of the Stamford Group was that the Executive Committee "get news of recent events in St. Louis to Pastors in the District."

CHAPTER 7

NEOLIBERAL MEETINGS

General Lueking

Although there are centers of neoliberal strength throughout the country, as at Stamford and Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, the headquarters of the neoliberal movement became Grace Lutheran Church, River Forest. The pastor was Dean Lueking. Although Pastor Lueking had not carried on the neoliberal theological battle to a very

great extent, his task became the coordination, operation and implementation of the neoliberal political machinery.

In a letter to neoliberal District Contact men in 1970, Lueking attempted to rouse the men to action: Our worst enemy is apathy. Do not think for a moment that this whole business is a minor skirmish. A sectarian, Fundamentalistic, nonlutheran, sterile, loveless, divisive men-

talities [Pastor Lueking is characterizing his view of the typical conservative and in particular the President of Synod] is threatening to put our Synod into a Babylonian captivity."

Like a general in battle, Pastor Lueking continually was arranging meetings and making phone calls to help implement neoliberal strategy and goals. One conference call, "involving 34 men from coast to coast, cost \$260.00," he writes in a memo to district contact men. That particular conference call discussed the need for co-workers, the usefulness of the Koenig neoliberal Newsletter, the general tone and tenor of the respective districts, and the memorials which needed to be written for the upcoming conventions.

Ironically is Pastor Lueking's memo to fellow neoliberals explaining that he had "been asked to accept leadership of a group throughout the Synod who feel that events have constrained us to mobilize our convictions appropriately and express them constructively. Referring to a "powerfully organized group within the Synod," Lueking stated that it was the conservatives who had "constrained us to mobilize...." This stance of accusing conservatives of starting all of the synodical unrest would be put to good use by neoliberals friendly with secular newspaper religious editors.

Steering Committee

The steering committee of which Pastor Lueking was the supposed head, included former President Fuerbringer of Concordia Seminary. Although Dr. Fuerbringer's name is seldom seen on the instructions and promotions sent out by the neoliberal political organization, he was and continues to be a leader, motivator, and strategist of the neoliberal takeover of the synod's doctrine and administration.

The steering committee often would meet at Grace Lutheran Church or at Concordia Teachers College, River Forest to plan the strategy. Such meetings included Fuerbringer, Lueking, Koenig, Elmer Witt and others. One of their goals was to flood the districts with professors from Concordia Seminary speaking at all kinds of district meetings. That would give them the opportunity to project themselves and their neoliberal theology.

It is no secret that members of the steering group traveled around the country attempting to get fellow neoliberals to speed up the implementation of ALC fellowship, and similar neoliberal concerns. An example of the scheduling follows: Area meetings for Fuerbringer and Bekemeyer [a Chicago pastor] were set for the Twin Cities April 22-

24; for Fuerbringer, Lueking and Bekemeyer at River Forest on April 27; for Bekemeyer and Lueking in Kansas City on May 4; for Lueking at Denver on June 1 and in San Francisco on June 2 and in Los Angeles on June 3. It would not be surprising if some of the members in Lueking's congregation became concerned over his many absences from the parish.

I THE UNION LEAGUE CLUB March 16, 1970

Only two of the many neoliberal meetings which are even now going on, will be analyzed. The first meeting occurred on March 16, 1970 at the Union League Club, Chicago, Illinois. Those invited to the meeting were Reuben Baerwald, Ben Eggers, Walter Friedrich, President A. O. Fuerbringer, Albert Huegli, Richard Koenig, Robert Madigan, Richard Meier, Martin Marty, Paul Simon and Elmer Witt. The high echelon of neoliberal leadership!

Agenda

The agenda for the meeting was the following: "District by District summary (Witt), Reports on regional contact (Fuerbringer), Newsletter (Koenig), Format for District mobilization (Lueking), Critique of organization (Madigan, Simon), Finances (Friedrich), Synodical convention tasks and prospects, brainstorming, and further meetings." The announcement for the meeting mentioned that Rev. Lou Bekemeyer "will sit in with us to provide a look at an effective model going in Northern Illinois." It is interesting to note that already in 1970, the neoliberals believed that they were effectively controlling a whole district. Others who attended the actual meeting included Dean Lueking, Albert Neibacher and A. R. Kretzmann. (Note: In the following neoliberal report by Elmer Witt, the word "evangelical" is to be translated "neoliberal.")

Reports

On March 16, 1970 Pastor Witt reported on results of district-by-district contacts with key men in the synod:

INDIANA: polarized between north and south on election of new president. No movement organized pro-ALC fellowship, etc.

COLORADO: no activity on either side to report. NORTHWEST: main issue is district elections; some good leadership at work for evangelical position. FLORIDA-GEORGIA: Good atmosphere in leadership and support-

tive constituency. TEXAS: Anti-fellowship movement now brought out into the open. District leadership cautiously pro-fellowship; good prospects of growing support for evangelical spirit. OKLAHOMA: some organizing activity underway supporting fellowship. NORTHERN NEBRASKA: No altar-pulpit fellowship yet, but coming. No organization for supportive work. SOUTHERN NEBRASKA: Prospects for leadership of the district (soon to be united with N. Nebraska) at present indicate that anti-fellowship forces are stronger. Evangelical spirit is beginning to get moving. KANSAS: Good response from pro-fellowship men. Reactionary group is organized, but with no apparent capacities for a take-over. SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA: Though strong evangelical men are there, no organized work as yet. Reactionary group is organized, but unclear about its strength. NORTH DAKOTA: A move to dump fellowship failed at their recent convention; some hopeful men elected to praesidium of the district. MID-SOUTH: Nothing happening; slim resources. SOUTH WISCONSIN: Anti-fellowship group very well organized - but this may be their undoing. The uncommitted middle not being won by tactics of this group. Pro-fellowship forces are a decided minority, but organized and working quietly. NORTH WISCONSIN: Generally good shape; strong positive leadership being supported by an able constituency. IOWA: EAST AND WEST: A mixed scene, hard to discern any strong trends as yet. MINNESOTA - SOUTH: Able leadership, and goodly number of strong supportive men. Anti-fellowship group vocal but weak. MINNESOTA - NORTH: roughly similar to Minn. South. ENGLISH DISTRICT: Frey ought to be persuaded to run again as president, but if he will not - good prospects for able successor. MICHIGAN: 30 men meeting about once a month. District leadership cautiously cooperative. Anti-fellowship forces will probably emerge. Fellowship being practiced where expected. ATLANTIC: Pro-fellowship Spirit strong. SOUTH DAKOTA: election of new president (Crosmer) a hopeful sign. MISSOURI: Openness and Trust group has drawn the fire; a quiet supportive group forming up behind all that fanfare. Their eye is on district elections. Probable that the incumbent will be re-elected. SOUTHERN ILLINOIS: Though anti-fellowship forces organized, the strong leadership of Neunaber looks secure. Supportive group working. CENTRAL ILLINOIS: nothing happening; scattered evangelical forces need help. CALIFORNIA-NEVADA: The

gusto of some of the avant-garde brethren has the present leadership a bit bewildered and uneasy; the potential evangelical forces need unifying. NORTHERN ILLINOIS: a supportive group for unity and mission is well organized with clear goals for coming convention, elections, etc.

No reports were received from the Eastern, Southeastern, Montana, and Southern Districts.

Considerable time was given to these reports, with the following general assumptions as far as the relationship between the Steering Committee and the Districts is concerned;

- 1) Offer help to any and all who ask it. This means an assist in devising workable strategies, appropriate to the unique factors in each district. Men need to clarify the obstacles standing in the way of fellowship and mission. These may range across the spectrum from radical right to radical left, with apathy in the middle. Opposing forces must be exposed for what they are - a force opposed to the very spirit of Christ and life under the Gospel. No uniform approach is possible; multi-formity is necessary, but some form of mutual contact is helpful.
- 2) Goals: prevent overthrow of ALC fellowship, witch-hunts, (especially in Synodical schools); prevent mass-defections from Synod; develop atmosphere of understanding for the changes necessary in the life of the church and the means to achieve these goals at district and synodical level. The mood of the land at the present is away from highly organized "party" groupings.
- 3) We must beware of overconfidence. We get too clubby, speak only to ourselves. Must be conscious of the importance of winning the uncommitted middle. More imagination, resourcefulness needed in support of the evangelical cause.

Fuerbringer

Then Dr. Fuerbringer gave his report. He covered 16 states in recent months, spoken with many clergy, some laity, and district presidents: Impressions: 1) majority of clergy are apathetic to fellowship. Non-involved. Fearful of criticism. Will go with the majority. 2) Evangelical cause must be unified, for the purpose of supporting and preserving the mission and unity of the Synod. 3) Must

work on long-range goals - 1980's and 90's. Though setbacks are inevitable in various areas, this cannot be reason to give up. 4) Diversity of approach and action essential. Attention needed on choice of delegates for conventions, district and synodical. Whole-some to have short-concise statements of support from local groups here and there throughout the land refuting the spirit of reaction. Much more letter-writing to synodical periodicals needed. Essays and articles also in order bearing on the dynamic of the Work issues of unity and mission, problems of schism, etc. Both theoreticians and tacticians needed.

The committee planned three regional meetings and contracted neoliberals in these regions to act as coordinators. The purpose of the regional meetings was to assess potential and problems, share ideas of mobilizing and provide opportunity for men to gain incentive to establish workable district organization to achieve the long-range goals they sought. The next meeting was scheduled for April 27 at River Forest.

II RIVER FOREST August 30, 31, 1970

One of the most important and far-reaching meetings of neoliberals occurred on August 30 and 31, 1970 at River Forest. The significance of the meeting lay not only in what was decided as a future course of action, but more importantly, in this revealing example of what neoliberals think of conservatives.

The agenda for the two-day meeting was the following:

| | |
|-------------------------|--|
| Sunday, August 30, 1970 | |
| 7:00-7:25 P.M. | Litany of the Church: Walter Christopher |
| | Orientation: Alfred O. Fuerbringer |
| 7:30-8:10 | Overview of the Synodical Situation: Arthur Repp |
| 8:15-8:55 | Objectives: Alfred O. Fuerbringer |
| 9:00 | Benediction |
| Monday, August 31, 1970 | |
| 9:00-9:15 A.M. | Morning Prayers |
| 9:20-10:00 | Methods and Procedures: Bertwin Frey |
| 10:05-11:05 | Looking toward Milwaukee: Herbert Schmidt |
| 11:10-11:50 | What is Authentic Lutheranism? Herbert Bouman |

| | |
|----------------|----------------------------------|
| Noon Hour | Luncheon |
| 1:30-2:30 P.M. | Local Activities Dean Lueking |
| 2:35-3:15 | Publications: Elmer Witt |
| 3:15-3:30 | Coffee |
| 3:45-4:15 | Finances: Richard McAuliffe |
| 4:15-5:00 | Items from Participants |
| 5:00-7:00 | Supper |
| 7:00-8:55 | Discussion and Plans for Action |
| 9:00 | Closing Prayers |

Since the meeting was nationwide for all neoliberals, the steering committee was working very long and hard to attempt to pay expenses for those coming from great distances. The leaders included Lueking, Fuerbringer, Professor Arthur Repp of St. Louis Seminary, Richard Koenig and others.

Grunewald

One layman, Arthur Grunewald, a delegate to the Milwaukee convention came to this meeting because he thought that it was an open meeting. He later wrote his impressions of the two-day affair.

Grunewald said:

It was pointed out several times by a number of those 'moderates' that this was an 'open' meeting and they would not be dealing in any secretive matters although not all pastors and teachers were invited. During that Sunday evening [August 30], they discussed that some of their ambitions were: 1. To put at least five more of their kind on the Board of Control of the St. Louis Seminary; 2. To challenge President Preus as much as possible; 3. To try to control the 49th convention of the LCMS at Milwaukee; 4. To try to exchange instructors between the St. Louis and Springfield Seminaries to influence Springfield to become more liberal [neoliberal]. They discussed setting up an elaborate public relations program that would reach at least every congregation that they felt might be sympathetic to their 'cause.'

It is interesting to note that Mr. Grunewald does not say too much about Monday the 31st. The reason for his silence is the following--Since the meeting was said to be an open affair, as the neoliberals themselves were insisting on Sunday, President Preus asked vice-President Rev. Theodore Nickel to be his representative. Vice-President Nickel phoned and received permission to attend the meeting.

Vice-President Ousted

The subsequent events are accurately described by editor Richard Koenig in his newsletter to neo-liberals on September 6, 1970:

On Monday morning, Fuerbringer took the extraordinary step of declaring an executive session following a paper on authentic Lutheranism by Dr. Herbert Bouman of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis. Declaring an executive session meant that all visitors who had not been previously invited were to leave. Among those who left was Dr. Theodore Nickel, second vice-President of the LCMS who had been sent by Dr. Jacob A. O. Preus, Synod President, as the president's personal representative.

The ousting of vice-president Nickel was not a surprise to the conservatives. With all the talk about openness and trust and reconciliation, the neoliberals seemed to realize that if ever top conservative officials knew what was being planned, the laity would soon be informed. Neoliberal leaders later tried to explain the ouster of the vice-President on the grounds that certain other persons at the meeting represented conservative publications which would have cast a terrible light on what was going on.

Although neoliberals have the reputation of tolerance and diversity in unity, the declaring of an executive session in order to stifle the conservative point of view represented the true colors of the neoliberal personality. Just as the conservative cannot tolerate a point of view which destroys his understanding of the Gospel, so also the neoliberal, unlike his tolerant reputation, is intolerant to the point of censorship of any point of view which contradicts his own.

Thus vice-President Nickel, representing the President of the LCMS, was not allowed to remain in a meeting which revolved around discussions relating to the future of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. A similar case would occur if vice-President Agnew were not allowed to sit in on a senate caucus because senators were going to discuss the future role of the United States in world affairs!

Resume Of Meeting

The following resume of the neoliberal Monday executive session was written by one who attended the meeting. The first area of concern dealt with various specialists:

Some of these might be: Specialists in polit-

ical action. We recognize that much of our work needs to be done in connection with the district and general conventions of synod. Many people in synod ought to be convinced of the harm of the rightist movement, and of the importance of keeping Missouri free, united and evangelical. A specialist in political action can advise us how to use the resources available to the movement in the most constructive and effective manner.

Three main tasks were discussed as options for implementing neoliberal goals.

Task: To work with District President and Synodical Officials. The chairman of this group [steering group] and those who assist him should have good contacts with District President and Synodical officials, especially chairmen and influential members of Synodical Boards. The chairman and his assistants must be well liked and known for their evangelical spirit. They should be able to discuss matters freely, be open minded, yet persuasive.

Task: To establish corps for district and circuit contact representatives. This should consist of a chairman and enough assistants that no man needs to work with more than five districts. These people should have the ability to size up and select men who will be favorable to the movement and openly espouse it and promote it. It is important that this group consist of people who accept responsibility well, who follow through on assigned tasks, who can relay information accurately to their contact persons, and who can receive feedback and evaluate it for use of the Steering Committee.

Task: Use of printed media.

This group should consist of people with demonstrated ability to communicate through writing. The chairman and his assistants should have ready access to the editors of various publications in the synod. In this group we need to have various specialized talents: some who can write for clergy, some who can write well for a general church audience, some who know how to communicate.

In order that the media be used to their fullest advantage, Pastor Elmer Witt outlined many of the opportunities to use the various media in order to reach objectives.

1. People to reach and with whom we should share our concerns....

a. Editors of the "Witness", "Witness Reporter", "Lutheran Layman", LWML "Quarterly", "C. T. M.", "Springfielder", and house

organs of various other special interest groups.

b. The Lutheran Hour Speaker, Dr. Oswald Hoffman, and the guest Lutheran Hour Speakers.

2. Letter to Editor columns. These are widely read and give us a unique opportunity to expose the phony issues, and to promote Gospel-oriented approaches to the Church's problems and the world's problems. We ought to have a small group who would not only make replies, but urge those best informed to write replies...

5. Influencing all sorts of meetings in our church to select speakers and essayists which will be consistent with the Mission Affirmations and the evangelical nature of Lutheranism. Our people need to get to program committees for pastoral conferences, circuit meetings, LLL and LWML rallies and conventions, Sunday School teachers' gatherings, etc.

6. Keep Dick Koenig's newsletter growing in numbers and influence.

The neoliberals also recognized the major role of clergy in communicating to districts. As decided, they

Will primarily utilize clergy communications, though efforts will also be made to reach laity. This consists of one task force leader, a number of assistants each responsible for a group of districts. Within each district efforts will be made to reach each circuit, and then each pastor and congregation. In business organization, with paid staff, it is recognized that this kind of contact work, if it is to maintain good two-way communication, has one person responsible for four to seven people at the next level... it is recommended that no one person be responsible for more than five contacts.

Since this group will teach primarily only those clergy and a few very active laymen who are generally favorable to our movement, we need to establish meaningful channels of communication with some leaders in each of the following groups:

Lutheran Education Association (our teachers

and their primary supporters in our many schools)

Lutheran Laymen's League

Lutheran Women's Missionary League

Walther League

Lutheran Human Relations Association

Campus Yough

Black Lutheran Groups

Representatives of other minorities such as

Chicanos, American Indians, et al.

In the first group the current leadership should be cultivated in person. In the LLL and LWML we need to seek out national board members and district presidents who are sympathetic to our movement.

[The Steering Committee was told to] establish a list of desired accomplishments at the following meetings: The 1971 Convention of Synod in Milwaukee; The 1972 District Conventions; The 1973 Convention of Synod in New Orleans. [Their objectives] must be stated in practical terms; Elections, convention memorials and resolutions; Influencing the selection of convention, themes, essayists, and other presentations.

A humorous note for conservatives, were the situation not so serious, is found in the objective for Richard Koenig's neoliberal newsletter, Mis-souri--Free United, Evangelical: "...we must counteract the polarization on the extreme right, and reverse the takeover of synod by the small determined minority of extreme reactionary conservatives." The neoliberals were soon to learn that this "small minority of extreme reactionaries" holding strongly to the traditional conservative 125-year-old synodical understanding of theology outnumbered neoliberals more than twenty to one.

One needs to keep in mind that the leaders of this meeting were the very ones who only a few months back were charging conservatives with secret, underhanded, closed political meetings, which supposedly led to polarization of the synod. One only needs to realize the goals of those attending the August 30-31, 1970 meeting as well as the treatment accorded to the representative of the synodical President, to discover which group is being reactionary and politically motivated.

CHAPTER 8

NEOLIBERAL ENGINEERS AND STRATEGISTS

Former Presidents Behnken and Harms should not be thought of as neoliberals, but because of their high administrative position within the synod, they were absolutely crucial to a successful neoliberal takeover in doctrine and politics. It is the contention of this writer that both these men were conservative in their beliefs and theology. It is also our contention that both Presidents, especially Dr. Behnken, failed to take action against the neoliberals because of the ambiguity of their theological positions, the deception of their actions, and the untrustworthiness of their statements.

I FORMER PRESIDENT JOHN W. BEHNKEN

Behnken Vs Neoliberals

That President John W. Behnken was a conservative, no one, including neoliberals, can deny. His position was that Scripture is without error in reporting on the historicity of the events reported. His constant emphasis on the purity of doctrine and his resistance to any ecumenical movement which would jeopardize the pure Word of God is well known. In agreeing that the synod had to remain apart from the Lutheran World Federation, which neoliberals years ago were struggling to enter, President Behnken gave as his reason for opposing membership: "We want something Scriptural, something truly Lutheran. May God graciously keep our beloved synod on sound and solid Scriptural grounds! May he preserve the purity of doctrine for us which He has so mercifully bestowed on us!"

At the time of President Behnken's death, the Valparaiso U. Cresset was in the control of neoliberals. In describing the relationship which the Cresset had with President Behnken, an editorial stated: "He and we differed deeply and irreconcilably on many questions which, for both of us, went to the heart of our understanding of the nature of the Church and its proper role in the revolutionary world of the mid-twentieth century."

But President Behnken during his whole time in office did not realize the extent to which the neoliberals had begun to change Lutheran theology. It was not until after he had retired and gotten away

from the neoliberal influences at the Seminary and 210 North Broadway (synod's headquarters in downtown St. Louis), that he realized he had been mistaken concerning the conservatism of many in the synod.

As Pastor James B. Tippin wrote on October 10, 1968: "I knew and loved Rev. J. W. Behnken for near forty years. A true man of God, saddened in his declining years when he finally was compelled to recognize the betrayal of 'MO' by his colleagues." In November, 1968, a conservative theologian of the Australian Lutheran Church, Dr. Herman Sasse, thought it a tragedy that Concordia Seminary would send their graduate students to study to neoliberal universities in Europe. "What a tragedy. The man who saw this tragedy in the last years of his life was Dr. Behnken. I know from his last letters how he suffered from the fact that he allowed his professors to mislead him."

Two years later, the same theologian, writing to an official of synod recalled again how Dr. Behnken has "suffered during the last years of his life. Now poor Dr. Preus has to try to make the best of it. The tragedy was that you had too many men at Concordia, St. Louis, whom he treated as gentlemen until he saw, too late, that this had been an error."

Already in 1965, President Behnken realized that the ambiguous statements emanating from the administration at the St. Louis Seminary caused men throughout synod to be disgusted. Dr. J. W. Behnken expressed his concern in a letter to a pastor in synod on June 1, 1965:

I congratulate you for taking up the matter directly with Dr. Fuerbringer.... And after discussing the matter orally and pointing out to him the shocking results of his failure to be the administrator which synod expected of him you very wisely reminded him of these things by putting down 'black on white' some of the items which you discussed.... He surely should realize that men throughout synod are disturbed and that he should do something about it since the disturbance emanates largely from members of the faculty of which he is the chief administrator. May God grant grace that he may wake up to realize the seriousness of what is happening. I am not merely

writing this to you. I have spoken to Dr. Fuerbringer very earnestly while I was still in office and since then I have written him in no uncertain terms.

Dr. Behnken was especially saddened because of what neoliberal theologians said at pastoral conferences. After one such conference in Michigan, at which Professor Norman Habel presented his view of the historical-critical method, Dr. Behnken wrote that "according to direct reports which I had from some of the people, the dissatisfaction with the paper was far more pronounced than the Reporter has reported. A prominent man also told me that Dr. Fuerbringer hurt himself every time that he spoke."

28 Questions

In 1967 the situation for former President Behnken came to a head. As he himself writes in a letter of March 6, 1967 to all members of the Council of Presidents: "After attending two meetings of the Council of Presidents and the Theological Faculties I was troubled very much. I wrote down a number of questions and referred to the many passages of Holy Writ in which God gives His answer. On August 6, 1966, I mailed the questions, as I am presenting them to you, to the President of the Seminary, Dr. A. O. Fuerbringer." Dr. Fuerbringer and the faculty never did answer President Behnken's 28 questions.

The day after he wrote to the Council of Presidents, Dr. Behnken wrote a letter to a fellow pastor. In it he bemoaned the fact that:

Some present day theologians hold that God's account of creation is not to be taken literally, factually or historically, but must be understood as a legend, a parable, a symbol, a myth, etc. Then there are those who hold that where the traditional and the new interpretations of scripture are in conflict with each other we must grant the new interpretations equal rights, regard them as optional, or alternatives, and hence permissible. In view of the above I have a number of questions concerning some of the accounts which God gave in the Pentateuch. I am especially eager to know what position the present-day theologians of my dear Alma Mater, Concordia Seminary, are taking. My earnest request and fervent plea is that I be given frank, conscientious answers on the basis of scripture, God's Holy Word....

I am not a so-called 'literalist' or a 'fundamentalist.' I know that there are parables in Holy Writ. I know that there is poetry. However, I cannot agree that everything, which our reason cannot grasp or understand, must be placed into the category of 'parables, legend, myth,' etc., in an effort to make it understandable and acceptable to human reason. The miracles of the Old and New Testaments are simply beyond--not contrary to--reason. This applies also to the miracles of our Savior. It applies to His coming into the world, to His life, His suffering, His death, His resurrection, His ascension into heaven. My reason asks: How could God ever decide on such a plan as to send and sacrifice His only begotten Son? How could God's Son be born of the Virgin Mary? How could God 'lay on Him the iniquity of us all?' How could He make Him, who knew no sin, to be sin for us? How could the God-man suffer and die for my sin? How could He say, 'Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up' and actually do this on Easter morning? How can St. John say of Him, 'He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world?' How can my Spirit-wrought faith assure me that Christ's perfect fulfillment of the Law and His innocent suffering and death actually has reconciled me to God, that on account of it God forgives all my sins and makes me absolutely certain that I shall inherit eternal life? My reason does not grasp, nor can it explain these marvelous truths. I accept them and believe them because God's Word says so...

Should this submission to God's Word not apply to all parts of scripture? Must I not be ready to say, 'Thus saith the Lord?' Is this not true in every case unless scripture itself compels us to interpret it otherwise? Must we not let scripture interpret scripture? Must we not accept the truths which God has recorded in Holy Writ as He has given them?.... May we ever let God speak, let Him say what He wants to say, and wholeheartedly accept what He has said. God grant it.

Although it was too late for him to do anything, President Behnken finally realized how far the neo-liberals had gone in attacking the conservative 125-year-old position of the LCMS. As he himself said several times, "I wish I would have known six years ago what I know today, and I would have acted differently."

II FORMER PRESIDENT OLIVER HARMS

At first glance, it would appear that President Harms was a neoliberal because of the neoliberal support of his presidency. We only need to recall the Stamford Coalition which was a "movement to organize support for the administration of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod," at the time President Harms was in office. In reality, though, neoliberals considered the real power in the administration during the Harms years to be Dr. Walter Wolbrecht as we shall see, not President Harms.

Harms A Conservative

To understand that President Harms himself was truly a conservative, a person only needs to examine his private and public statements concerning the historicity of the creation accounts in Genesis and the importance of teaching that Adam and Eve were real historical persons. Such a position, of course, is in direct contradiction to that of the neoliberals. In fact, his position was what the historical critical practitioner would define as "fundamentalism."

In a Lutheran Witness Reporter editorial of July 3, 1966, President Harms said that "we take the position that Adam and Eve were individual persons, historical characters. That is what Genesis says. That is what the Lutheran Confessions say." What is so tragic is that during the very time this statement appeared in Lutheran homes throughout the country, neoliberal professors at the St. Louis Seminary were teaching the historical-critical method which allowed for the denial of such teaching and were themselves denying the historicity of Adam and Eve and the Fall. As one neoliberal professor said: "Such a theology [as President Harms'] is part of one's Sunday School belief."

In an apparent reference to the use of the historical-critical method in other denominations, President Harms in the same article stated that "whatever literary form or mode the first chapters of Genesis may appear to be cast in, the Genesis account tells us historical truth. God created the world and everything in it in six days, according to Genesis 1.... Let's make no mistake about it. Our doctrinal position on creation remains unchanged. Think of all the articles of faith involved in it: God, man, sin, redemption, faith in Christ, etc. We have not changed our doctrinal position."

To this day, there seems to be little evidence

that President Harms has changed his personal theological position. For him the Bible clearly describes the creation account and the existence of Adam and Eve as actual historical people. To deny this, according to Dr. Harms, would be running the risk of denying the Gospel. And this is the official position of the Missouri Synod. But what is so puzzling concerning President Harms' statements, is the non-awareness displayed concerning the actual situation, not only at the seminary but in many other parts of the synod.

In a letter to a concerned layman, dated April 1967, President Harms called "attention to the fact that the doctrinal position of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod is sound. I'd like also to call attention to the fact that my constant admonition to writers and to speakers, to professors and administrators and others is that any statement which may be unusual as far as language is concerned should be carefully examined in the light of Scripture, the Historic Lutheran Confessions, and the doctrinal position statements of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod of the remote and recent past."

Hollow Ring

To conservatives who realized that neoliberals not only were denying Missouri Synod teachings, but also refusing to be bound by synodically-adopted doctrinal resolutions, President Harms' statements had a hollow ring. One concerned conservative pastor in Michigan received an answer from President Harms in which he was assured "that in my frequent conversations with professors who are in question in the areas you mentioned, I have the insistent statements and confession that they promote completely, and wholeheartedly our traditional position on inspiration, inerrancy, and revelation." Obviously, the situation was being misrepresented to President Harms.

Such a state of affairs was obvious to our sister churches overseas. In 1969, President Harms attempted to convince these churches that it was necessary and desirable to establish fellowship with the American Lutheran Church. One of the reasons for his determination to establish fellowship, wrote President Harms, was that, "the top-flight theologians in our synod, the best we can produce, have been involved in the production of the essays and Declaration Of Agreement and in considering all the items which are listed on the extra page. God has given us these theologians." President Harms' refusal to believe that it was the neoliberals in the LCMS who most desired to establish

fellowship led one European theologian to comment to President Harms that "practically all the information on vital aspects which the party men are giving you is non-factual." Translation: The neo-liberals pushing for fellowship are misrepresenting the situation.

Recalling President Harms' conservative statements on the necessity to affirm the historical creation and the historicity of Adam and Eve as described in scripture, it is important to know on what President Harms based his assurance that the St. Louis faculty agrees with such a position. As President Harms wrote: "In reply to some very frank questioning directed to the St. Louis seminary faculty, President Alfred Fuerbringer tells me that no member of the faculty is in any way disposed to deny that God created all things by His almighty power. No member of the faculty, he states, offers any theory of the origin of the universe and everything in it that does not accept all creation as coming from the Creator (Lutheran Witness Reporter, July 3, 1966)."

Fuerbringer Is Source

Let us analyze what President Harms wrote. His evidence that the St. Louis professors believe that God created the world in 6 days and that the scriptural account of Adam and Eve is believed to be inerrant, is based on President Fuerbringer's statement that every faculty member accepts all creation as coming from the Creator, a pure tautology. The ambiguity of the statement seemed to be obvious to everyone except President Harms. The question is not whether every faculty member affirms that God created the world; the question is whether every one affirms the creation of the world as described by the clear passages in scripture and as upheld by our synodically-adopted resolutions. In short, President Fuerbringer and the faculty must have been relieved that they could keep President Harms satisfied as long as they kept insisting on their beliefs that God created the world even though in the classroom they were allowing for interpretations which completely contradicted what President Harms called the "historical truth of Genesis."

Another statement along these same lines which demonstrates President Harms' apparent naivete at what was happening is the following: "I have the assurance from Doctor Fuerbringer that if anybody taught differently than does the Creed on creation, that person cannot stay at the Seminary. Really... there is not a question about the inerrancy of the Word of God." Obviously, President Harms interpreted the assurances given that the faculty affirm-

ed the "historical truth of Genesis" when the faculty affirmed the Creed. This led to a situation of which the President of the Synod was unaware--of what was actually being taught at the seminary.

That President Harms continued to live under the delusion that an undetermined number of faculty members were affirming the historicity of Biblical accounts was made plain even in the months prior to his defeat for re-election at Denver. He reported he had been reassured by seminary and college presidents that all is well at their institutions.

In May, 1969, President Harms wrote to a District official: "If I said that no professor or pastor of the Missouri Synod questioned any fundamental truth of the Confessions and the scripture [which for President Harms included the historicity of Adam and Eve and teaching of a six-day creation], I could have been speaking only of the knowledge that I had on the basis of my own inquiry. If I made such a statement, I made it on the basis of assurances that I have received either from District presidents who have supervision of the pastors of their Districts or from seminary or college presidents who are held responsible for the teachings at the respective schools. In this regard I should like to say that I have firm assurance... from the two seminary presidents that they would not permit any professor to deny scripture or what the Confessions say of them."

Some contend that President Harms' apparent ignorance concerning the position of the neoliberals over against scripture, and his refusal therefore to take disciplinary action led to his defeat at Denver. Already in 1967 conservatives throughout the synod were deeply disturbed over President Harms' failure to acknowledge what was occurring at the St. Louis Seminary. One Concordia Publishing House employee, who saw first-hand the effects of the neoliberal political machinery in the area of church publications, wrote in February 1967: "I got so worked up the other day that I was strongly tempted to write Harms a note to this effect: 'What are you trying to do anyhow? Go down in church history as being at the head of the administration that sat on its hands and allowed the church to drift to hell?' All he ever writes is palaver, just words piled up for the sheer satisfaction that may come from having something that adds up to nothing. Again, God help us!"

A L C Fellowship

A growing conviction that President Harms was being misled by neoliberals occurred during the

years when he used every means at his disposal to implement fellowship with the neoliberal American Lutheran Church. He was led not to listen or heed conservative voices in the church which cried out against the neoliberal historical-critical methodology as taught in the ALC. He was apparently still under the delusion that everyone in the ALC also believed that the historicity of Adam and Eve was absolutely crucial to upholding the doctrines of God, man, sin, redemption, faith in Christ, etc. Of course, such was not the case.

Eight months before Harms' defeat, conservatives were writing one another letters such as the following: "I have insisted President Harms has failed synod utterly (halting between opinions, obsessed with expediency, fiddling away while Rome burns around his ears,) carrying on a veritable political campaign this year to pressure 'fellowship' with ALC."

An Australian churchman wrote on November 27, 1968, after President Harms had visited the Lutheran convention there to press for fellowship: "The matter has been decided for him. I personally suspect that he sees now that he has gone too far. He is obviously shocked by the resistance he finds in his own church."

What probably saddened conservatives most was President Harms' wavering between whether he should do something or whether he should let things go. In April 1966, at the California-Nevada District Convention, President Harms admitted that "we always have had problems in the church and it's not unusual that we have it today." He indicated that of the 50 professors at the St. Louis Seminary, there were five or six with whom he was having trouble. And in April 1966, in Detroit, President Harms again admitted that there were serious problems, "that it was difficult to handle them, and this would take some real time and consideration." It was during that meeting he indicated that the pastors should continue to send in protests whenever they disagreed with anything.

Yet the many protests did not seem to change his mind even on the conservative contention that the two seminaries were drifting further and further apart theologically. In his Memo To My Brethren, August 1968, President Harms wrote: "Faculties [at the seminaries in St. Louis and Springfield] do agree.... On occasion when I have been pressed for an answer in a more difficult and complex issue I have presented the matter in an identical way, to the respective departments at both of our seminaries.... I have found these answers to be essentially in agreement. You may want to remember this when someone insists that there is such a wide divergence between these faculties."

Conservative Complaints

But pastors were getting more and more tired of seeing protest after protest being mailed to St. Louis, with nothing happening. It would be fair to say that President Harms was so strongly pressured into really believing that things were not changing that he honestly thought that action was not necessary. But not all pastors and lay people thought that this was so. After reading one of President Harms' statements concerning the upholding of inerrancy and historicity at the St. Louis Seminary, a district official wrote to a district president: "I just lost a family to the Wisconsin Synod because of the doctrinal unrest in our church body.... I pleaded with him to stay.... He said, 'If only Dr. Harms and the Praesidium would once admit that there is a problem, perhaps I would be willing to help. But as long as they refuse to admit that anything has changed, I cannot stay.'"

In the same letter the writer's reaction to President Harms' contention that all the members of the faculty accept the scripture as inerrant was: "He certainly realizes that in this day of neo-orthodox [neoliberal] terminology such a statement meant nothing, and he ought to realize it too. This kind of drive can be interpreted only as a deliberate attempt to cover up the problem or as a naivete that is hardly befitting our leadership. In Christian charity, I prefer to believe that the latter is the case."

But not all conservatives were that charitable. One conservative professor recalls in a letter of August 1966, a conversation he had with President Harms during the same month: "There's no question as to his [Harms'] own position--it's as orthodox as mine--and there's no question as to what he wants to do. But the rub is that he isn't going to do anything. He indicated to me that he's afraid if he takes action, synod won't uphold him. I think he should take action regardless of the consequences, though I agree that if he takes action, the liberals [neoliberals] will mount a real campaign to discredit and undermine him." And that was written almost three full years before President Preus defeated President Harms for the presidency of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

III WALTER WOLBRECHT

Real Architect

It was asserted by both conservatives and neo-liberals that the real power in the LCMS during the presidency of Oliver Harms, was not President Harms, but Dr. Walter Wolbrecht. This was no secret because even neoliberal publications [Una

Sancta] boasted of Dr. Wolbrecht as the "master executive" and "strong man" of synod.

That he was in the neoliberal camp both doctrinally and politically cannot be denied. On January 22, 1972, the Milwaukee Journal counted Wolbrecht in with the synod's neoliberals who "tend to view scripture as a human document subject to errors and misconceptions at the time of writing."

It is reported that Dr. Wolbrecht not only was the grand architect for the neoliberal political takeover of synod, but he was also the one leaking scoops to secular newspapers who would then print material opposing conservative beliefs and administration.

His meeting with Dean Lueking on December 18, 1970, at the Oak Park Arms Hotel near Chicago was one of many meetings to plan strategy and communication lines. Being such a central focus of neoliberal politics and teachings meant that he strongly opposed conservative beliefs and teachings. Little wonder, that the Milwaukee Convention abolished his long-held position as executive director of the Missouri Synod.

On January 21, 1972, the Seminary Spectrum reported that "the Rev. Dr. Walter F. Wolbrecht, former executive director of the Missouri Synod, has been named president of the Lutheran School of Theology in Chicago, a seminary of the Lutheran Church in America." The following reaction from a lay delegate to the Milwaukee convention upon hearing the news is typical of conservative reaction throughout synod: "As a layman I came to the conclusion that his faith as a Confessional Lutheran in the LCMS was very weak to trade it for a job in the LCA. Something good could come of all this though, if some of his liberal [neoliberal] friends followed him and let us LCMS members get back full time to proclaiming the true Word of God." It is certainly an understatement to say that beneath the surface of neoliberal happiness and joy at Dr. Wolbrecht finding a new job, the fact that one neoliberal who held so high a position could be turned out of office by a synodical convention, set a precedent which was most unwelcome to the faculty majority of St. Louis seminary, who had hoped to fight as a team to the bitter end.

IV ALFRED O. FUERBRINGER

St. Louis Seminary President Alfred O. Fuerbringer along with Dr. Wolbrecht maintained strong and effective leadership within the neoliberal movement for many years. We need only to recall the statement made by President Behnken about President Fuerbringer in June 1965. President

Behnken stated that Dr. Fuerbringer should realize that men throughout the synod are disgusted and that something should be done by President Fuerbringer himself, since "the disturbance emanates largely from members of the faculty of which he is the chief administrator."

Ambiguities

In view of former President Harms' misinformation as to what the real situation was in synod, his remarks concerning the basis for his statements insisting that all is well at the St. Louis seminary are revealing: "If I made such a statement, I made it on the basis of assurances that I have received either from District Presidents who have supervision of the pastors of their Districts or from seminary or college presidents who are held responsible for the teachings of the respective schools." There is no need to review the ambiguities of President Fuerbringer's statements to President Behnken and President Harms to realize that from a neoliberal point of view the statements meant something entirely different from what President Behnken and President Harms imagined they meant.

Writing in 1965 to a pastor who accused the seminary of allowing false doctrine to be taught, President Fuerbringer wrote that he denied the charge: "No responsible person, from the president of synod down to our newest student, after he has fully studied the facts, been on our campus and talked to the professors who allegedly are teaching these untruths, will declare that we are teaching false doctrine."

At times, one cannot interpret President Fuerbringer's statements as only ambiguous; they seem to be misrepresenting the facts. On March 3, 1965, he wrote to a pastor in Michigan who questioned the seminary's stance on the theory of evolution: "We have never taught or permitted this to be taught." But any casual reading of the literature and articles coming from the pens of seminary professors during this time plainly show the misrepresentation of such an assertion. Even if the majority of professors were not teaching evolution in the theistic sense as fact, they certainly were not admonishing students who eagerly spoke of the advantages in such a theory. There cannot be the slightest doubt that theistic evolution was a tolerable theory allowed to be held by students and faculty alike in more than one school in the synod during that time.

The neoliberals have not been secretive concerning President Fuerbringer's involvement in the neoliberal political movement since Denver, 1969. But prior to Denver there had been a reticence to

admit President Fuerbringer's involvement in even the most informal meeting for neoliberals. Even he himself denies participation in such neoliberal strategy sessions.

On September 19, 1968, ten months before the 1969 Denver convention, veteran Dr. John Baur wrote President Fuerbringer, telling him about "a widely circulated rumor that you and one of your faculty members took part in a meeting of liberals [neoliberals] in Chicago ... the meeting was a follow-up to one held not so long ago in Stamford, Connecticut. Apparently the purpose was to set the stage for the Denver convention." President Fuerbringer replied: "From my standpoint, what I did in Chicago recently was not 'to attend a meeting' in the usual sense. In other words there was a gathering of men to discuss the fellowship matter with the ALC." Now the neoliberals even have a new understanding of what it means "to attend a meeting."

Political Activity

But after Denver, and the election of Dr. Preus, such ambiguity and secrecy was discarded. Immediately neoliberals realized the importance of having a publication which would bring information to all contact men and interested neoliberals. The result of that need was MFUE (Missouri--Free, United, Evangelical). The first issue appeared November 3, 1969. Neoliberal Richard Koenig editor of MFUE, wrote that the letter "is being sent out at the instruction of a committee headed by Dr. Alfred Fuerbringer, former president of Concordia Theological Seminary, St. Louis, Missouri.... Others serving on the committee are Mr. Richard Meier of Indianapolis, Indiana, and Dr. Dean Lueking of Grace Lutheran Church, River Forest, Illinois."

The second edition of MFUE honestly reported that the editors Koenig, Fuerbringer, and Lueking "confer from time to time on events and items which should be reported to you." Dr. Fuerbringer as a St. Louis source for neoliberal publications was available. In fact, it was on August 3, 1970, when Dr. Fuerbringer met with other neoliberal leaders at River Forest, that the decision was made to flood the districts with professors from Concordia Seminary speaking at all kinds of district meetings.

At an August 30 meeting, Fuerbringer gave his report of visits to sixteen states to speak with clergy, laity and district presidents in an attempt to provide the basis for the long range goals of the 1980's and 90's.

Dr. Fuerbringer's part in the dissension which existed even seven years ago was recognized by many who knew what was going on. On December 13, 1964, Dr. Fuerbringer spoke about Job 19:26 and the phrase "without my flesh." His use of the historical-critical method so infuriated one of the conservatives in attendance, that he later wrote: "The shift to no-resurrection in this passage is made without the slightest effort. There's no laying out of the evidence, pro and con. I laid such evidence before Dr. Sauer some years ago, and he couldn't be bothered with it. Basic is an apathy for truth. And we could prepare the most solid array of evidence, it would mean nothing to them. They don't need it for their glib slipping away from the truth. And they are completely unconcerned about thousands of pastors standing at a grave and saying Job 19:26, and telling, in their interpretation, an untruth in the face of death." The writer of that letter was Dr. William Beck, the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod's only translator of the entire Bible!

V DEAN LUEKING

From reading the neoliberal publication MFUE, it is clear that Pastor Dean Lueking of Grace Lutheran Church, River Forest, is not only on the central neoliberal political committee, but also "confers from time to time on events and items" with Dr. Fuerbringer and Pastor Koenig.

Gospel Is Norm

On July 21, 1971, the Chicago Tribune editor Briskin, placed Lueking into a group of men "who see the Bible as sacred but not a precise history of events and persons." Such a notion, as understood by neoliberals, stands in direct opposition to the conservative understanding of the Scriptures as inerrant. Pastor Lueking, interviewed by James Bowman of the Chicago Daily News on October 14, 1972, characterized the heart of the synodical polarization as "the question of Biblical inerrancy, or complete factual accuracy. Allowing for some minor figurative interpretation Dr. Preus has held for strict literal interpretation of the Bible. 'But what sells the Bible,' says Dr. Lueking, 'in effect, is the Gospel, not any predetermined notion of inerrancy.'" Dr. Lueking set up President Preus as a straw-man, but the interesting point is that Dr. Lueking, like all neoliberals, thinks in terms of the Gospel's superiority and normativeness in the area of exegesis.

Pastor Lueking's particular task was to keep in

touch with neoliberal advance guards or contact men and give them the kind of information which would best implement the purposes of the movement. In return, these neoliberal contact men would work with the leadership in supplying necessary information at appropriate times. For example, in December 1970, Pastor Erdmann Frank, a District vice-president, sent to Dr. Lueking a complete mailing list of all pastors and vicars of the Florida-Georgia District. Pastor Erdmann wanted the Koenig Newsletter to go to all of them.

Being at the "headquarters" of the neoliberal political machine, Pastor Lueking found it necessary to keep in touch with important officials in the synod. Not only did he meet with Dr. Walter Wolbrecht, not only did he make regular phone calls to President Tietjen at the St. Louis Seminary, but he even kept in contact with district presidents. He told President August Bernthal of the Florida-Georgia District "to actively prepare all delegates for intelligent participation at Milwaukee." He also wanted Dr. Bernthal to persuade other members of the Council of Presidents to head off "whispering campaigns, pre-convention approved lists, and the circularizing of slanderous materials."

To neoliberals throughout the country, Pastor Lueking sent letters keeping them up to date on the latest publications or articles which suited the neoliberal theological and political stance. On December 20, 1970, he told contact men that they would soon receive a "hermeneutic piece by Edgar Krentz, layman's voice by Ros Jensen, essay on the Word by John Tietjen another guidepiece for laity and clergy by Martin Marty on the Fundamentalist problem. The current Concordia Historical Institute Quarterly has a useful piece on the old '44 Statement. Blockbuster coming in late December, Christian Herald is running a two-part article by Ken Woodward (religion editor of Newsweek) entitled: 'The Civil War in the Missouri Synod.' Don't miss it. It has very significant potential. Reprints will be available."

Grace Lutheran Church

One member at Grace, River Forest, recalls a congregational meeting in June 1970, which became very heated because several men were irritated that Pastor Lueking was always gone. They wondered where he went. Deeper rumblings or protest began right after the August 30, 1970 meeting at which vice-President Nickel was told to leave. One member of Grace described the meeting as "vicious, loveless and cunning." Pastor Lueking did not hesitate to use congregational stationery and postage for the neoliberal cause. During the early

mailing from Grace, postage and envelopes were furnished by Professor Walter Bouman of River Forest. But soon this donation ended causing one layman to exclaim: "This shouldn't be Grace Church expense!"

Over half the staff of the church opposed Lueking's theology and his political activities. After going to one of the staff devotions, one member said that he asked "God for forgiveness for having participated." It was not long before members began attending other churches. Unaware of what was happening, volunteers spent long hours for Kingdom Frontiers. Some of the laymen were angry because of what had been done to the memorial fund for former Pastor Geisemann. One letter written in protest of Pastor Lueking's handling of church affairs asked what he had been doing that the Board of Directors of synod considered "to be so divisive and fragmenting to our Synod?"

In preparation for the 1973 convention in New Orleans congregations were asked to submit a nomination for the presidency of synod. The neoliberals were pushing for Dr. Oswald Hoffmann of The Lutheran Hour. Pastor Lueking had worked hard to get Dr. Hoffmann nominated by as many congregations as possible. But in February 1973, the voters assembly at Grace by a one-vote margin endorsed Dr. Jacob Preus as their nomination for president of the LCMS. Referring to the vote for Dr. Preus as a "power play" by conservative members of the congregation, Pastor Lueking maintained that he "later received phone calls complaining that the vote was 'simply not representative.'" Although he had called a new meeting of the congregation to reconsider its vote, he decided to call it off, possibly because of the advice from neoliberal leaders in other parts of the country.

The irony of calling what had happened a "power play" by conservatives was easily recognized by members of the congregation. What is even more interesting is that of the 1,000 members of the congregation, only 27 of them even showed up to endorse their nominee for New Orleans. In a memo to all circuit, district, regional brethren and friends for Bert Frey and Dean Lueking, dated March 5, 1973, Dr. Lueking attempted to set the record straight. A five-man hand-picked committee had unanimously recommended Dr. Oswald Hoffmann for president. "Roughly 85% of our members contacting the committee expressed preference of Hoffmann." Dr. Lueking does not give the number of members who contacted the committee. And he also does not explain why there was such a small attendance at the meeting except to state that, "members expressed chagrin at their own carelessness in not being present and accounted for when the

voting is done!" Lueking noted that the vote for Dr. Preus at Grace Church could have a detrimental effect on the neoliberal cause.

VI BERTWIN L. FREY

Former president of the English District, Bertwin L. Frey, is a good friend of Pastor Dean Lueking. In fact, their common interest in getting neoliberal doctrine to become the predominant theology in the synod brought them closer together.

In 1971, Dr. Frey told Dr. Lueking that he was deeply appreciative of the time Dr. Lueking was spending in support of the neoliberal movement. He suggested that Dr. Lueking consider the possibility of bringing in some outside help into the office to be paid out of the Kingdom Frontier Fund. In contrast to Dr. Lueking's almost total preoccupation with the neoliberal political movement, Dr. Frey has attempted to formulate a persuasive neoliberal theology for the ordinary pastor and layman. Although not as logical as Professor Strietelmeier and Pastor Bretscher, Dr. Frey has been partly successful.

Declaration

A partial success is his Declaration of Determination which Pastor Lueking sent to every conceivable contact man in the districts. The subtitle of this book was inspired from the fact that the neoliberals did manage to get 1,400 signatures of pastors and laity on this document while the conservatives already have a quarter of a million endorsements for Crossroads which stands in marked contrast to the theology of the Declaration.

Best known probably about Dr. Frey is his opposition to synodically-adopted resolutions. Even as District President he defended Pastor R. M. Redder, who was publicly promoting and participating in Pan Lutheran Eucharists in Cincinnati, Ohio. Pastor Redder, along with ALC and LCA pastors, gave joint services in which all in attendance--Lutheranism was not a prerequisite nor was the lack of fellowship with LCA a deterrent--were invited to partake in the Lord's Supper. Dr. Frey said that he could do nothing since synodical resolutions are not binding. Since then Dr. Frey has written a number of pamphlets which contend for the idea that not only should doctrinal resolutions adopted by synod not be binding, but also that our forefathers never regarded them as binding upon members of the LCMS. These deceptive contentions need to be examined.

Also Ambiguous

Dr. Frey seems to reveal the same ambiguous tendencies as does Dr. Fuerbringer. In a forthright publication against conservatives, entitled What Is A Lutheran Pastor?, Dr. Frey contends for the neoliberal stance that "differences of interpretation [of the Scriptures] are not divisive of fellowship." In this pamphlet Dr. Frey contends that neoliberals who question the historicity of Jonah nevertheless are kept from questioning the historicity of Jesus' resurrection and other events basic to our faith "because of the clear statements of Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions."

Seemingly ignorant of the fact that to a historical-critical practitioner the Scriptural statements concerning Christ's resurrection may be as non-historical as the statements referring to the Jonah account, Dr. Frey appears to think that no seminary professor questions the literal scriptural understanding of the Incarnation, the Crucifixion, the Resurrection and the Ascension. However, one neoliberal professor said to a recently held pastoral conference that his problem is not the area of the historicity of Adam and Eve; he is having problems with just those doctrines which Dr. Frey thinks no Lutheran should question because of the "clear" statements of Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions. Once the historical-critical method is used in the study of either the Scriptures or the Confessions, the only clear result is that nothing in the Scriptures or the Confessions is as clear as it once was, nothing is as sure as it appeared to be. Only the "gospel" (as defined by the neoliberal) possesses certainty.

VII RICHARD KOENIG

Pastor Richard Koenig, campus pastor at Amherst, Massachusetts, is best known for his two neoliberal publications, Missouri-Free, United, Evangelical, and Lutheran Forum. After MFUE had served its purpose and was losing support, Pastor Koenig was appointed as editor of Lutheran Forum and the Forum Letter. We shall later take a close look at the content of these neoliberal publications. Right now we shall point out that their purpose seems to be to bring pressure to bear on the conservatives, especially President Preus, and to ridicule conservatives personally and their doctrinal position.

Name Calling

When the contract of Professor Arlis Ehlen was not renewed, Pastor Richard Koenig characterized

those who had made the decision not to renew the contract as "fanatics." In fact, Pastor Koenig's writings so defamed the character of President Preus prior to July 1971, that the Milwaukee synodical convention made specific references to Koenig's writings and called him to repentance for "offenses against the synodical President." (Convention Proceedings, Resolution 5-23)

In describing the administration achievements of President Preus, editor Koenig wrote that "in less than six months after taking office, President Preus managed to create an atmosphere of fear and suspicion in the Church. . . . Preus' reputation among more than a few synodical servants is that of a man who cannot be trusted." Editor Koenig's double standard became clear in a letter he wrote six months after he defamed President Preus with the above statement. The letter was written to a conservative. Pastor Koenig wrote that "personal abuse is not only tiresome but counterproductive."

One other area where editor Koenig's statements are undisciplined to put it mildly, centers in the neoliberal myth that conservatives are "highly organized," whereas neoliberals are struggling as best they can. As you read the following statement, keep in mind that it was written in a Newsweek editorial July 1971, a full ten months after the August 30-31, 1970, neoliberal strategy meeting in River Forest. After the editorial describes neoliberals as "...a handful of comparatively disorganized liberals," in comparison to the conservative party, editor Koenig is quoted "...all the moderates really have going for them is the good word passed along from brother to brother." The sense of that statement is completely contradicted by the reality of the mammoth political machinery which the neoliberals have been shown to have had in motion even prior to 1969.

In his better moments, though, editor Koenig's honesty provides conservatives with solid evidence for the correctness of the charges they were making. In discussing the non-renewal of Professor Ehlen's contract Pastor Koenig wrote that "previous confrontations allowed for interpretations which played down or concealed differences between the two parties." But now Dr. Ehlen's "dismissal" clearly revealed "for the first time the theological issues dividing the two parties." One can only imagine the effect of this honest declaration on neoliberals such as Dr. Fuerbringer, who for years had played down the differences between the neoliberals and conservatives.

However, in spite of these glimmers of honesty, Pastor Koenig's writings kept up a constant barrage of invective. When President Preus made

known his choice of men for the Fact Finding Committee which would investigate the accuracy of the charges against the St. Louis Seminary, editor Koenig expected "little results" because the "committee is weighed in favor of conservatives."

On July 21, 1971, the Chicago Tribune quoted editor Koenig as labeling the election of two conservatives to the Board of Control of Concordia College, River Forest "a disaster." In a letter to a neoliberal, editor Koenig wrote what he would do if conservatives attempted to stifle the neoliberal political movement: "If Preus forbids any formal Newsletter or any communications, we'd go underground and I know how to do it and I'll tell others how it can be done." Again, such neoliberal honesty proves the conservative contention for a good many years that a powerful machine is stopping at nothing to take over the synod both doctrinally and politically.

VIII OTHER NEOLIBERAL PERSONAGES

This section will attempt to touch on just a few of these other men in order to impress upon the reader not only the depth of intolerance and animosity toward the conservative Lutheran, but also the consistency of the statements and actions against the 125-year old doctrinal stance of the synod. Because later sections will deal with some of these men, we shall at this point only give examples of neoliberal infiltration into various areas of the synod.

John Elliott

An obvious area of neoliberal concentration is the St. Louis Seminary. Even though more radical than most of his neoliberal colleagues, Professor John Elliott was quite frank in his assessment of the opposing theologies within the synod. For many months pastors in the field had been complaining about the teachings and writings of Dr. Elliott. One particular article which raised the ire of many a conservative was a piece which Dr. Elliott wrote for the Lutheran Layman's League Bible Study series. Because of his use of the neoliberal historical-critical method of interpretation, Dr. Elliott concluded that the Epistle of First Peter may not have been written by Peter at all.

One conservative pastor protested to the LLL: "What I read shocked me. . . . The possibility of dating the First Epistle of Peter between 90-115 A.D. is suggested, while the death of Peter is acknowledged to have been during 64-67 A.D. If the date

of the Epistle were that late, some other pious imposter would have been in collusion with God to give us this specimen of inspiration; for Paul also died in the 60s. Horrible!"

There are those who contend that because of such protests and the action of a group of concerned conservatives in synod, Dr. Elliott left for greener pastures. But his parting words haunted neoliberals and conservatives alike: One result of the meetings between himself and conservative proponents was "the manifestation of two quite different, if not irreconcilable, approaches toward the understanding and interpretation of both the Sacred Scriptures and the Lutheran Symbols."

Walter Bouman

Yet neoliberal faculty members were not limited to the St. Louis Seminary. It is well-known fact that the theology department of River Forest Teachers College, is to a large degree, neoliberally oriented. During the same time that Dr. Elliott had come under attack by the conservatives, Professor Walter Bouman, nephew of Professor Herbert Bouman of the St. Louis Seminary, was up for tenure.

One conservative who wrote to the Board of Control of River Forest in protest against granting Professor Bouman tenure, based his request on the fact that one student he personally knew "was most seriously disturbed in his faith, almost fatally, by reason of doctrinal dissipation on the part of the above named Professor [Bouman]."

Another student, who had gained from Dr. Bouman "insights into Scripture which I consider invaluable," nevertheless, strongly protested his teachings that the creation account of Genesis "is not necessarily factual," and that "we are inspired by God in the same manner in which the holy writers of Scripture were inspired."

A speech he gave in May 1970, at Elm Grove, Illinois, depicted the extent of Dr. Bouman's opposition to the synodically-adopted resolutions dealing with the "interpretation of specific passages" in Scripture. Especially in his discussion of what inspiration means did his true neoliberal position become clear: "The true doctrine of inspiration, however, recognizes that the miracle of inspiration is that God gets His Word said through and even in spite of human characteristics, limitations and weaknesses." He then quoted some statements from the Australian Theses but omitted other pertinent statements from the same Theses which completely repudiate the neoliberal understanding of inerrancy and, therefore, also of inspiration.

This tactic of "taking out of context" is used by neoliberals especially in the area of the denominational writings of our forefathers.

Walter Wifall, Jr.

One of the more publicized conservative protests against a neoliberal professor occurred in 1966. Pastors Brill, Bakaeyar, Meyer, Krause, Braun and Drovlow brought charges of false doctrine against neoliberal Professor Walter R. Wifall, Jr., of Concordia College, St. Paul, Minnesota. The case aroused a great amount of excitement on the campus with groups of students formed either in support of Dr. Wifall or in support of the protesting pastors.

This case is a good example of the neoliberal techniques of ambiguity and "different definitions" in order to confuse conservative forces. For instance, it was no secret on the campus that Professor Wifall allowed for the denial of the historicity of Adam and Eve, as well as the literal account of creation as found in Genesis. But in June 1966, Dr. Wifall wrote to a protesting pastor: "I teach that Adam and Eve were created by God as real people who fell into sin and were redeemed by our Lord Jesus Christ: I teach that the Pentateuch was written by Moses and the Book of Isaiah by Isaiah; I teach that the events recorded in the Book of Jonah did occur as shown by a. historical data in the book itself; b. our Lord's reference to Jonah and Nineveh in the New Testament; I teach that the heavens and the earth were created by God in six days; I teach that the miracles recorded in the Old and New Testaments of the Bible occurred as they are stated in the Scriptures." These statements were refuted by the testimony given by students from the classroom.

Richard Jungkuntz

Dr. Richard P. Jungkuntz, former executive secretary of the Synod's Commission on Theology and Church Relations, lost that position by a vote of the commission itself. The neoliberal Christian Century described those who voted Dr. Jungkuntz out as a "reactionary majority of the commission members." Editor Koenig went further in an interview with the Milwaukee Journal. Blaming Dr. Jungkuntz's dismissal on a conservative force who "planned and smoothly executed" the vote, editor Koenig expressed regret that minority members of the commission could do little to stop Jungkuntz losing his position.

Much of the neoliberal propaganda surrounding

Dr. Jungkuntz's release, centered on the allegation that President Preus had seen that Jungkuntz was not re-engaged. He supposedly did this by placing conservatives on the CTCR. But the truth is that the majority of men voting against Jungkuntz were elected as representatives of the seminaries or by the synod in convention. It is said that even neoliberals on the commission voted against Dr. Jungkuntz because of the poor kind of leadership he was exerting. Conservatives were angered at the political maneuvering of Dr. Jungkuntz with President Fuerbringer and his bad influence, along with Pastor Arnold Wessler, administrative assistant to President Harms. Dr. Jungkuntz soon found another position as provost in an ALC college.

Dr. Martin E. Marty, professor at the University of Chicago's Divinity School has been quite helpful in laying out a rationale and a persuasive neoliberal theological stance beamed at the laity as well as giving political leadership. In his Layman's Guide To The Issues he defines all the traditional conservative terms in a neoliberal manner; e.g., "infallibility--the Bible will infallibly guide to salvation in Christ, Saviour and Lord." He seeks to persuade the laity that "we [neoliberals] make no such threats nor do we desire purges or seek power. We will take appropriate actions to try to prevent a well-organized minority from seizing power in the Districts and in synod itself. But we are not peddling an alternative ideology or party line."

IX CONTACT MEN AND TREASURY

Because of the complex array of political machinery, the neoliberals needed to have an excellent network of communications. This was partially achieved through the use of contact men in the various districts. The following are some of these men and the districts they represented at the time. Colorado-Nevada--H. Schmidt; Central Illinois--Lorman Petersen; Kansas--Eugene Schmidt; Michigan--A. L. Neibacher; Indiana--Walter Schoedel; Missouri--Samuel Roth; Nebraska--Robert Kamprath; N. Dakota--Frederick Rehwaldt; Northwest--David Preisinger; North Wisconsin--Dale Hansen; Ohio--Leonard Stohs, Enno Gahl; South Wisconsin--Valentine Mack; California--Herbert Hohenstein.

Obviously, with letters being sent out continuously, with meetings being held around the country continually, and with conference calls, some up to \$250.00, the neoliberals needed some source to cover expenses. After one program of obtaining pledges for money from dedicated neoliberals, Pastor Lueking and President Fuerbringer wrote a thank you note: "Many of you have indicated that you will be sending in payments on your total amount pledged. We earnestly hope you will be minded to continue your support. We can see that four to five thousand dollars a year will be needed for the foreseeable future as we work together for effective implementation of the fellowship resolution through the synod. Continue to send your contributions to: Grace Lutheran Church, River Forest, Illinois, marked 'Kingdom Frontiers.'"

This "Kingdom Frontiers Fund" was originally the "Frontiers of Faith Fund" established by Grace Lutheran Church in memory of former Pastor O. A. Geisemann. When some of the laity discovered what their fund was being used for, they became angry and protested what Pastor Lueking was doing.

Around May 1970, Pastor Lueking spoke to neoliberal Walt Friedrich about the possibility of using money from the Church Renewal Fund at Valparaiso University. Since Valparaiso President O. P. Kretzmann had control over the money, Friedrich asked him that both Pastor Lueking and President Fuerbringer be paid for their expenses from the Church Renewal Fund. His idea was to transfer money from the Church Renewal Fund into the fund established for Pastor Geisemann and then use all the money for the neoliberal cause.

It was not long before money began coming from neoliberals around the country. One St. Louis professor contributed over \$500.00. Persons would designate to which project they were contributing. At one point in the contributions, \$787.00 was received for Newsletter; \$1,126.50 for Planning, and \$2,359.00 for Dr. Richard P. Jungkuntz. Under "Planning," money was used for expenses incurred during trips to meetings, stationery, and phone calls. A number of St. Louis Seminary professors, synodical staff members, and even Dr. Oswald Hoffmann (neoliberal candidate for LCMS president) contributed to one or another of these funds.

CHAPTER 9

NEOLIBERAL CONTACT MEN AND TREASURY

Because of the vast amount of information on the neoliberal attempts to take over the administration and the doctrine of the conservative LCMS, there needs to be a detailed examination of the major incidents.

I CONCORDIA SEMINARY -- ST. LOUIS

We recall that for sometime, neoliberal seminary professors and the administration attempted to deny the fact that the historical-critical method was being used at the St. Louis Seminary. On November 1, 1966, a pastor wrote expressing his wish that responsible men would "testify that the higher critical view [neoliberal, historical-critical method] is being permitted by some of the professors at the St. Louis Seminary in 1965." To questions of whether or not false doctrine was being taught and tolerated at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, one synodical official admitted that it was being taught but in his judgment since "many are protesting against this false doctrine, we cannot say it is tolerated."

Protests

On October 22, 1968, conservative Pastor Emmet Rogness of Oklahoma recalled the words of another pastor who ten years before had forewarned that Missouri would be going through what it is today. And on January 15, 1967, a pastor in Stover, Missouri, told his congregation that "it is also a fact that professors on the faculties of our seminary, some colleges, and universities have made and continue to make statements that cast doubt upon some of the doctrines which we have always held to be scriptural; notably the doctrines of inspiration and creation. These things are no secret."

An European theologian after talking to Dr. Repp of the seminary said: "I told Dr. Repp what a tremendous mistake it was to send the future professors to European universities without the necessary spiritual guidance.... St. Louis is now one of the large Protestant faculties like Princeton or Union where everyone can teach what he wants, provided he signs tongue in cheek, the Book of Concord." This also is the view of conservative Dr. Richard Korthals, former professor at Concordia Junior College, Ann Arbor.

At times, though, neoliberals did admit even in 1965 that they were no longer agreeing with the theological teachings of the Missouri Synod for the past 125 years. Back in August 1965, neoliberal Professor Sauer, who, by the way, had changed from conservatism to neoliberalism after he was called to the seminary, admitted that Dr. Walter A. Maier opposed the historical-critical method of interpretation. Yet, as one pastor recalls, Dr. Sauer insisted, that the historical-critical approach "is so probable that it must be accepted." Students having graduated from the seminary became more open about the change in the seminary's stance on doctrine. Rev. Bill Irving told the LLL Seminar in Quincy in March 1966, that there definitely has been a change in the doctrinal position at the seminary and he was happy for it.

Today there is no need to look in secret places for evidence that the seminary has accepted what was once rejected by the whole synod. The neoliberal publication, Concord said in its January 1973, edition: "The gradual acceptance in the 50's and 60's of the historical-critical method of biblical study at the Seminary further exacerbated the situation."

Once Conservative

It is important to realize that many of the neoliberal professors were once conservative. And the change from conservatism to neoliberalism often occurred after they arrived at the seminary. Besides the evidence we have given for the change in Professors Herbert Mayer, and Alfred von Sauer, others also admitted that the seminary professors had changed their theological stance. A pastor from Wisconsin wrote on January 11, 1967, that after telling Professor Wegner the traditional, conservative position, Wegner replied: "I used to think that was so too, until I came to the seminary." There is no doubt that many students, although basically conservative before coming to the seminary, soon changed to the neoliberal stance on doctrine. No wonder---what with only five of the professors publicly proclaiming their stance as conservative.

Not only was there a close relationship between Dr. Fuerbringer and other neoliberal leaders, but St. Louis professors were also being used at the discretion of Dr. Lueking, Dr. Frey and Reverend

Koenig. The August 30-31, 1970, neoliberal meeting decision to smother the synod with professors speaking at forums and meetings soon became a reality. St. Louis conservative Pastor Walther Hoffman wrote to pastors in his area: "The Pan-Lutheran St. Louis Pastor Conference together with Southern Illinois brethren have really cooked up a program giving the 'libs,' faculty members of Concordia Seminary, a platform from which to espouse and proclaim their divisive doctrine.

The Board of Trustees of Lutheran High Association has granted the use of Lutheran High North and South on October 18 and 19, 25 and 26, and November 1 and 2, 1972, for studying this divisive teaching.... Dr. Sauer in consultation with John Meyer and Willard Mueller of Southern Illinois District has engaged Professors F. Danker, Wegner, Piepkorn, Krentz, Sauer, Smith, Habel, Klein, Kalin, Herb Mayer, Jones and Graesser to be the leaders in this, their seminar with topics: 'Paul and Law and Order'; 'God's Created World, Then and Now'; 'Salvation by Christ Only or Other Ways?'; 'Accounts of Crucifixion'; 'Messiah, Servant, Son of Man in O. T. '; Pictures of Paul in Acts and Pauline Letters'; 'Creation Accounts'; 'Abraham Stories'; 'The Gospel and the Gospels: Are More Being Found?'; 'Scripture Alone and Temptation Account in Matthew 4:1-11'; 'Faith Alone in Study of Exodus 3-14 (J)'; 'Early Tradition (J) Genesis and Grace Alone.'

In a note that went out to neoliberal pastors asking for their support, Pastor Buerger of St. Louis asked that participants "read Professor Herbert Mayer's little book Interpreting The Holy Scriptures, in preparation for the seminars." It is this book that allows for a mythical interpretation of the early chapters of Genesis. In fact, for Professor Mayer, anyone who insists that Adam and Eve must be considered as historical persons is a legalist. By the way, this book was recommended for teachers in the parishes as a basis for learning the Missouri Synod method of interpreting the Scriptures!

What Dr. Fuerbringer told vice-President Nickell and others who were forced to leave after the neoliberal August 31, 1970, meeting was declared an executive session, shows the relationship between the neoliberal political machinery and St. Louis Seminary. Dr. Fuerbringer stated that whatever questions any may have about the session can be answered "at Friday's news conference at the seminary in St. Louis."

What are the results of St. Louis Seminary be-

coming the second headquarters for neoliberal strategy planning? On the doctrinal level, neoliberal classes have led to a kind of depressing atmosphere on the whole campus and especially among the students. Although neoliberal students would blame the situation at the seminary on President Preus for initiating the inquiry, others realize that the problem is deeper. Seminarian D. Fakes wrote in the student publication, Spectrum, on January 19, 1972: "...I must say that I too am sick at heart over the loneliness, confusion, and alienation at this place. I see so many men here caught up in their own little world of vocational indecision, unemployment, family problems, oppressive situations, and general existential angst.... I am convinced that improvement in relations on this campus has to begin with the individual. When our own house is in order, the doors open to the wider problem we are experiencing. I believe it is harder for us to love ourselves than to blame the community or any other convenient scapegoat for what is happening (or not happening) here."

A PRESIDENT JOHN TIETJEN

Long before the Denver Convention, the neoliberal faction in synod decided that one of their own, needed to be elected to the presidency of the seminary. In early 1969 President Fuerbringer had only a few more months before he was to retire as president of the St. Louis Seminary. Neoliberals were beginning to realize the depth of conservative resentment. In fact, even among themselves (although not in the open) neoliberals were wondering whether President Harms could be reelected. The problem lay in the fact that if Dr. Harms were not reelected, a strong conservative would become president of the LCMS.

Repp And Quick Election

So, months before the Denver election, during a regular faculty meeting, Professor Repp, vice-president for student affairs, told the faculty members that they had better think of getting a president installed at the seminary before the Denver convention. The wheels began to turn. Rarely, in the history of the synod had an incumbent seminary president taken such an active part in the election of his successor. The usual practice would be to wait for the retirement of the incumbent before the faculty would begin looking for a new president.

What happened next has led many a conservative congregation to include memorials to its districts and synodical conventions, pleading that the manner in which our seminary presidents are elected be

changed. The 1971 LCMS Handbook explains the procedure: Congregations of the synod, the Board for Higher Education, the Board of Control, and the faculty of the institution may nominate candidates for the position of the presidency. The names of those nominated are then published. Then a faculty "shall make a careful analysis of the needs of the institution, the requirements of the synod, and the academic qualifications of the nominees. . . . On the basis of its studies the faculty committee shall make pertinent recommendations to the electors with regard to the choice of a suitable person from a list of candidates which they propose for the elector's consideration."

In effect the faculty committee, elected by the faculty, decides which of the candidates are acceptable. The recommended list is voted on by the electors, who include "the members of the Board of Control as a group with one vote (the District President not voting with the board); the president of the synodical District or his official representative with a district vote; the President of the synod or his official representative with one vote; and the chairman of the Board for Higher Education or his official representative with one vote."

Even before nominations began arriving at synodical headquarters, the neoliberals appear to have decided that Dr. Tietjen would be the choice. It was a simple matter for the faculty committee to excise all conservatives from the list of candidates, especially since the committee was elected by a majority neoliberal faculty. But let us realize what such an excision involved. Of the many men whom congregations nominated for the position of the presidency, Dr. Ralph Bohlmann had over 100 nominations, conservative Martin Scharlemann had over 60 and Dr. John Tietjen had only a handful. Dr. Tietjen was presented and elected.

The need for a change is obvious. Whether the faculty committee is given the power only to recommend or whether the synod in convention elects school presidents for a definite term of office as does the ALC, the need for change is imperative. No longer can any church body allow a handful of selected faculty men decide who shall be their president. The election of Dr. John Tietjen and the farcical acts of the faculty committees at the Senior College and River Forest point to a lack of fairness and the need for correction. The power of the church has been turned over to a select few.

The Rev. John E. Lutze of Manitowoc, Wisconsin, said the following concerning electing presidents: "Far from enhancing synod's system of producing ministers and teachers of the Gospel as those who were primemovers in the transitional

days of our burgeoning higher educational system envisioned it, the results of Missouri's election process has been chaotic and degenerative. . . . Recent seminary and College president election difficulties tend to support the church's concern. The partisan movement, remolding the doctrinal implications of synodical membership, has apparently discovered a political super-weapon.

"The church at New Orleans must allow the time for exhaustive and decisive deliberation, she must ward off the demagoguery and reject the ruses of individuals involved in, or enlisted for, the pro-faculty majority process who will blandly assert again that the faculty committee merely investigates and screens. Informed and thorough delegates will not be hood-winked."

Tietjen Right Man

Within neoliberal circles, there was no question as to why Dr. Tietjen was the man for the task. As editor of the American Lutheran he successfully muzzled the voice of the conservatives. He did this simply out of the realization that the conservatives and the neoliberals were miles apart in their understanding of the Scriptures. To one conservative he wrote in June 1969: "You are all mixed up about the meaning and interrelationship of the gospel, doctrine, confession and theology."

His own statements betray his neoliberal stance clearly. He is quoted in the July 26, 1970, Milwaukee Journal as saying that "Many Christians are able to affirm that God is Creator and that there was an evolutionary process. If they are able to do so, I see no problem." He is quoted in the Cincinnati Post of September 29, 1972, that "a literal interpretation of the Book of Jonah might mean that Jonah was not an historical figure swallowed by a big fish but that the book was written as an allegory to illustrate a spiritual principle." Not only does his view on Jonah demonstrate his neoliberalism but especially his changing of the definition of the term literal, so that instead taking something literally can mean that one understands it allegorically. This is another attempt to use conservative terminology without the traditional Lutheran meaning! In the Lutheran Witness Reporter of September 21, 1969, Dr. Tietjen is quoted to say that "there needs to be a diversity of viewpoints, even conflicts of viewpoints." In the same article he continues the neoliberal myth that the seminary has been "the object of a slander campaign." And he asserts: "Many of our critics are quite frankly more fundamentalistic than Lutheran in their approach to the Bible (Release from the St. Louis Seminary, July 14, 1970)."

However, his neoliberal theology is not consistent. While neoliberal leaders like Drs. Lueking and Frey are giving the impression that different "definitions of inerrancy, authorship, and methods of interpretation... are not divisive, (Declaration Of Determination)," Dr. Tietjen has often written attempting to "prove" that the conservative theology and method of understanding scripture is "unscriptural."

Along with his neoliberal doctrinal stance, Dr. Tietjen is very active in the neoliberal political machinery. During the past years, Dr. Lueking has kept in constant touch with Dr. Tietjen with lengthy phone calls. In December 1970, Dr. Lueking was telling his district contactmen to look for an "essay on the Word by John Tietjen." Neoliberal layman Robert Madigan of the Stamford Coalition received several thousand copies of Dr. Tietjen's speech for the Atlantic District Conference for distribution to key areas of the synod.

Neoliberal St. Louis President Tietjen has visited many district conventions during the past years in order to present his propaganda to give the impression that his seminary is not a hot bed of neoliberalism. Sometimes he did well, and sometimes not. The 1970 Central Illinois Convention at Quincy found him in great difficulties. Five or six pastors in one night asked him a number of searching questions, including whether there are really errors in the Bible. When Dr. Tietjen agreed that there are errors in the Bible, he was asked how they got there and whether the Holy Spirit allowed the errors to be put into the Scriptures. To the last question, he answered in the affirmative. Since 1970, this has been strong evidence that he opposes the synodically-adopted resolutions of the 125-year-old synod.

In July 1969, Dr. Preus was elected president of the LCMS. Before neoliberals could regain their breath, their worst fears were realized. President Preus was going to do what his predecessors had been asked to do time and time again--conduct an inquiry into the teachings of the faculty members at the St. Louis Seminary.

B THE SEMINARY INQUIRY

Survey

Space does not permit the detailing of hundreds upon hundreds of protests (against the seminary) that were being sent to synodical headquarters for the past ten years. Even President Tietjen spoke of a "bulging file of letters (Lutheran Witness Reporter, November 18, 1970)." All one does is

examine what the seminary itself discovered. In early 1970, the seminary paid \$5,000.00 for a survey among selected pastors in order to discover what the synod was thinking. On July 14 of that year Dr. Tietjen said that "opposition to his institution was localized in a vocal minority within the Missouri Synod." The seminary publication release explained: "The survey revealed that two-thirds of the pastors of the Missouri Synod considered the Seminary to be true to sound Lutheran principles. Only 15% of the pastors of the synod were unhappy with the Seminary's efforts."

The June 1971 issue of the conservative publication Affirm challenged the accuracy of the seminary's interpretation of the survey: "First, serious questions about the methodology used in the study can legitimately be asked--telephone interviews: no documentation to show the degree to which pastors declined to be interviewed in this manner." In contrast to the soothing summary observations of the survey's own Report, Affirm observed that "the vast majority of respondents--90%--feel that St. Louis is deserving of the synod's financial support, but only two-thirds would agree that it is true to sound Lutheran principles." Affirm correctly noted that "according to the researchers themselves a projected one-third of 1,567 of the pastors in service according to the sample do not regard the St. Louis Seminary as true to sound Lutheran principles."

And at the time of the poll it is most assuredly true that a goodly number of pastors in the field did not as yet realize the extent and the depth of the doctrinal diversity. How could they, with most seminary administrators still insisting (and recalling assurances by former President Harms) that everyone at the seminary continued to believe in the inerrancy of the scriptures.

When it was announced that an official inquiry would be made, neoliberal reaction was swift. On an official level President John Tietjen reacted by saying that "in the year that I have been at the seminary I have pursued every problem called to my attention and have personally investigated every doctrinal issue raised on our campus. As far as I have been able to determine on the basis of the facts available to me, the members of our faculty are scriptural, confessional, and evangelical and are teaching in accord with their ordination vows." Explaining why some are accusing the seminary of tolerating false doctrine, Dr. Tietjen said that there is a misunderstanding of "what constitutes Lutheran doctrine and about what heresy is.... It is not Lutheran to require uniformity in exegetical conclusions or in the nature and authorship of Biblical texts as a basis for fellowship in the church."

As one realizes that for neoliberals "exegetical conclusions" include results of studies dealing with the historicity of events described in the Scriptures, Dr. Tietjen's statement can be seen to be judging as unlutheran the synodical criterion for deciding what is false doctrine. Dr. Tietjen did give the indication that he was "confident that good will come out of the Synod President's proposed inquiry into the teaching of some members of our faculty. The inquiry will help our Synod clarify what it means to be Lutheran." Of course, Dr. Tietjen is referring to what it means to be a neoliberal Lutheran.

Welcome Investigation?

The official attitude of the neoliberals that they welcomed the investigation was, in fact, untrue. From the moment the news reached the seminary, character assassination and invective against the conservative position was intensified in the classroom and the chapel. Dr. Martin Scharlemann questioned what happened on campus when the five members of the Fact Finding Committee were announced: "...why such fussing and fuming when a duly appointed committee of five was assigned to do the interviews which were used for the 'Blue Book?' [Report] These five men are men in good standing in Synod. They are brethren; and yet at first the faculty tried to prevent the job from being done. Then it tried frustrating the operation and, after that, it began to distort things. And yet the President of the Seminary was brazen enough to tell an open hearing at the Milwaukee Convention that the faculty had always fully cooperated!"

Neoliberal political machinery went quickly into action via church publications and secular press releases. Editor Richard Koenig, probably supplied with information by means of his phone calls to Dr. Fuerbringer, wrote in the November 1970 Lutheran Forum: "...Preus seems determined to force the seminary faculty to knuckle under to his imprecise views on the matter, while the faculty has been forced to evasive tactics instead of fearlessly addressing themselves to urgent theological problems. And while the two teams line up, the rank and file of the synod, both lay and clergy, look on with bewilderment fast turning to anger over the obvious fact that the Lord's ministry of reconciliation is betrayed by fraternal strife." Notice the official neoliberal contention that the faculty is being forced into evasive action and the inference that Dr. Preus, with his "lousy theology," started the whole thing. The idea that the majority in the synod was angry at Dr. Preus would soon be seen to be another neoliberal myth.

On October 1, 1970, the St. Louis Globe-Demo-

crat, quoted editor Richard Koenig as "expecting little results" from the inquiry. The same article fed by Pastor Koenig and the St. Louis faculty majority characterized the inquiry as a hersy trial. Editor Koenig's complaint was that "the Fact Finding Committee was weighed in favor of conservatives."

Probably one of the most brutal, yet honest, reactions from the neoliberal forces came from the pen of neoliberal, Wayne Saffen, pastor of Lutheran Campus Parish at the University of Chicago. Writing predictably in the Lutheran Forum of May 1971, Pastor Saffen describes the inquiry as an "inquisition. It is 'camp', burlesque. Nobody can really mean it. It is simply socio-drama with heroes and villians playing old parts.... But then the Inquisition grinds on and the unbelievable become empirical. The family of faculty and students is in the process of demoralization as the official crunch comes down. The absurd raised to the level of the surd, when serious men are called on the carpetlike little boys to answer to apostles of frustrated dictators." Displaying the neoliberal point of view as to why President Preus initiated the investigation, Pastor Saffen contended that the inquiry "pays off his campaign debts," obviously referring to the myth that Dr. Preus' election was one of "politicking" rather than one of the majority will of the delegates assembled in convention.

In saying that "the Preus administration made its choice to be inquisitorial and repressive in the church," Pastor Saffen clearly demonstrates what he thinks of Dr. Preus. Pastor Saffen's article not only gave indication of the neoliberal stance but, more importantly, is evidence of the campaign that was to be launched against the very personhood and personality of President Preus. The tragedy of this character assassination is that some pastors in the field who heard nothing else, soon adopted similar false notions. And never did the administration of Concordia Seminary or any neoliberal dissociate themselves from the cruel Saffen invective.

The neoliberal publications gave evidence of the seminary's true feelings of animosity towards the investigation. Classrooms, cafeteria, and private talks with students were used by the faculty majority to repudiate not only the idea of an inquiry but also the constitutional legality of conducting one.

George R. Plagenz, religious editor for the Cleveland Press, wrote on March 18, 1972: "When it came to miracles and the supernatural, the evangelist and the Jesus People no longer asked, 'Did it really happen this way?' as the scholars had done. They went back to... 'I believe in a God who

can make a whale and who can make a man and make both do what He pleases.' Historically, this has always been the Missouri Synod's approach to the Bible miracles. At some point, however, the 'historical method' [historical-critical method] in Bible study began to creep into the curriculum at the Synod's Concordia Seminary. Pastors were being turned out who had their doubts about the historicity of certain Bible stories. Whether Dr. Preus' predecessors (Behnken and Harms) were aware of the developing trend is hard to say. But it wasn't until after Dr. Preus was elected president in 1969 that anything was done about it. Dr. Preus ordered an investigation into the theological beliefs of the members of the Concordia faculty. The action enraged many pastors, some of whom could see it leading to heresy trials for themselves." Notice the objectivity of Plagenz in analyzing the inquiry, not as the work of the devil but rather as the natural reaction by a conservative administration which realizes that the creeping historical-critical method has crept far enough.

The members of the Fact Finding Committee and their positions at the time of their appointments were Pastor Karl Barth, President, South Wisconsin District; Dr. Elmer Foelber, former House Editor, Concordia Publishing House; Dr. Armin Moellering, Pastor of Grace Lutheran Church, Palisades Park, New Jersey; Dr. Paul Streufert, Fourth Vice-President of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod; and Dr. Paul Zimmerman, President of Concordia Lutheran Junior College, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

In their attack against the persons conducting the inquiry, the neoliberal spokesmen defamed them openly. Kenneth L. Woodward described one of the members of the Fact Finding Committee in the January 4, 1971, edition of Newsweek: "Sitting in judgment on some of the church's most respected scholars was a panel of four fundamentalists and one pastor generally identified with the church's moderate majority. Heading the inquiry was Dr. Paul A. Zimmerman, president of a Lutheran Junior College, whose theological reputation rests largely on his efforts to prove that God created the world in six days of 24 hours each."

C THE FACULTY MINORITY

Faithful Five

One other group of five men who came under the most intense form of character assassination are members of the faculty: Professors Ralph Bohlmann, Richard Klann, Robert Preus, Martin Scharlemann, and Lorenz Wunderlich. Examples

of neoliberal intolerance and censuring against them would fill the pages of a book. The point of division between the faculty majority and minority occurred at a specially called faculty meeting in April of 1970. At that time, the majority of professors closed ranks behind Dr. Tietjen in his condemnation of Professor Martin Scharlemann for writing President Preus asking for a full investigation of the seminary.

Only a small group of professors refused to go along with the neoliberal strategy. Professor Scharlemann's statement in the letters-to-the-editor section of Christianity Today (March 2, 1973) describes the meeting as follows: "Only a handful of men stood up on that day to resist one of the most outrageous totalitarian tactics ever perpetrated in the history of Lutheranism." The five professors, who came to be known as the "faculty five" or "faithful five," opposed the power play taken by the administration of Concordia Seminary "for the simple reason that we want no part in the political corruption which prevails there and in the fraud that is being perpetrated on our Synod." The neoliberal attack on the faculty minority was as subtle as it was brutal.

The faculty majority pretended that the faculty minority did not exist in the beginning. Statements made by the majority included the all-inclusive sentence: "The faculty of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, affirms the following..." thereby, ignoring the faculty minority point of view. When the minority members asked that their position and vote be counted and made known to the synod, they were refused that right. At times, they even had to resort to the students' publication Spectrum in order to make their views known. One main reason for this neoliberal behavior toward the faculty minority was that the propaganda machine kept insisting there were no theological differences in theology among faculty members.

On November 3, 1970, when the faculty majority issued Statements Adopted by the Faculty of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Mo., the faculty minority refused to sign the Affirmations on Unity. They gave the following reasons:

1. We are concerned that the issuing of such a declaration at this time, when the seminary faculty is to be investigated, may be regarded in our synod as a device to neutralize or impede the investigation of the seminary;
2. We are convinced that there are basic theological differences within the faculty, including matters pertaining both to the interpretation of Holy Scripture and to the meaning of confessional subscription in the Lutheran Church.... Since our integrity as

theologians of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod compels us to offer this explanation of our decision, we respectfully and fraternally request that our explanation accompany any publicity pertaining to the 'Declaration'[Statement by the faculty majority]."

Martin Scharlemann Letter

To dispel rumors that he opposed the faculty majority because he was not elected to the presidency of the seminary, Professor Martin Scharlemann wrote the following letter as a summary of the course of events leading up to the inquiry:

Perhaps, it will be helpful to list here the sequence of actions which led to the present situation. This will reveal that 1. the theological position I espouse is of long standing; 2. that warnings against the theological erosion taking place at the seminary were uttered some years before the present administration existed; and that 3. confessional and professional integrity demanded an inquiry into the conditions prevailing at the seminary even before the arrival of President Tietjen.

As early as the school year, 1967-68, I repeated a great many times, in both department and faculty meetings, my convictions that our confessional stance was being compromised in the teaching going on at the seminary, especially in an attempt to identify Gospel with social action.

It will be helpful to point out that this was some months before Dr. Repp one day suddenly announced to the faculty that we had better get a new president before the term of President Fuerbringer came to an end. He suggested that the election of a new president ought to take place before the Denver Convention lest we get a man out of step with what was going on. I think you will understand how extraordinary such a suggestion is in light of the fact that new seminary presidents are not, as a rule, elected before the term of the previous one ends. I think it demonstrates a determination to prevent any possible change in what was going on at the seminary.

Dr. Scharlemann goes on to describe meetings held between the systematic and exegetical departments at the seminary. Although the first few seemed fairly cordial, it was not long before things began to get a little warm. For the most part "there seemed to be a strong reluctance to come to grips with the basic theological issues that were

troubling the seminary."

Prior to one of the meetings, the neoliberal document, Openness And Trust, described by Dr. Scharlemann as containing "horrendous theology," was distributed throughout the synod. At the next meeting Dr. Scharlemann reports:

It soon became apparent...that the new Seminary President was not about to take action in the instance of faculty persons who espoused the approach of 'Openness and Trust'. By this time it had also come to my notice that two other faculty members had called Dr. Tietjen's attention to theological irregularities, and that in some instances, they had not even received a reply.

At a joint meeting of the two theological faculties [Springfield and St. Louis] in the Spring of 1970, the two systematics departments passed a resolution pointing out the aberrations in an essay printed in a booklet of hermeneutics. That action was met by the curious and evasive insistence on Dr. Repp's part that the faculties had not come together to pass resolutions.

Under these conditions, I contacted the President of Synod to give him a revision of my remarks made to him after the first interdepartmental meeting on December 9, 1969. I expressed my alarm at what was going on. He asked me to take up my misgivings with President Tietjen. That was done and a number of meetings were held, both of the department of exegesis and with individuals.

It soon became evident that nothing much would be accomplished in this way. At that juncture, President Tietjen ordered the department to meet again. It did so...while there was some wholesome discussion, some of it was rather frivolous. The whole venture appeared to be a game we were playing. It looked as though we would not really get anywhere very soon.

The time had come, I concluded, to prepare a formal request to the President of Synod that official inquiry be made into the situation at the seminary. That letter was sent to President Preus on April 9, 1970. It described, under ten points, the strong kinds of doctrine that students were hearing and telling. My request suggested that whatever committee was to be appointed should be given authority to insist on straight answers. I indicated that I felt such an inquiry needed to

be made in order to clear the name of the seminary and to certify to the church that what was being taught was, in fact, Lutheran theology.

The response of the administration came in the form of a most vicious personal attack during a special faculty meeting called for that purpose for April 16, 1970. In this meeting--the subject of which the president refused to announce ahead of time!--the carbon copy of my letter to President Preus was read to the faculty, in my absence and without my permission. [I was on a mission with the AFROTC unit at Capitol University]. The faculty itself passed a much milder resolution than the administration had suggested, I might add. Three men among more than fifty had the integrity and courage to take exception to what was going on and had their objections as well as their negative vote recorded.

Since I am sure that this matter would come before the Board, I wrote President Tietjen at once, asking for permission to sit in the Board meeting to defend myself when his report on it would be made. This request was brusquely denied. In fact, I was accused of insubordination.

In time (as you know) the inquiry got under way. While professing all kinds of cooperation in public, the administration of the seminary used every conceivable device to call off or to frustrate the course of action determined by President Preus.

There was even this episode about the protest. It was based on the claim that President Preus had imposed an intolerable condition on the faculty when the Fact Finding Committee chose to receive from me a written document which attempted to describe in some detail the theological climate prevailing at the seminary. This was taken to be a personal assault on some colleagues, when, in fact, it was a discussion on five documents that had come into being within a few days before the inquiry began.

To date, the faculty committee has not been able to come up with any persuasive or convincing points to indicate that the situation we confronted was intolerable. By this time one or the other among our colleagues is having some second thoughts about all this, wondering whether it might not have been wise to have given glad assent to the inquiry and 'make a defense to any one who calls you to

account for the hope that is in you' (I Peter 3:15).

One of the reasons why the neoliberals have been partly successful in demeaning the motives of Dr. Scharlemann is their distortion of some of his past experiences with protesting conservatives. Between 1959 and 1962 Dr. Scharlemann had given some essays which appeared to contradict Missouri Synod theology. As one publication describes what happened: "He was faced at the 1962 convention with a resolution calling for his removal from the faculty. He survived by confessing he had caused 'disturbance and confusion in the church,' withdrawing the essays that prompted the attacks, and asking the church to forgive him."

Dr. Scharlemann himself argues against such an interpretation of the past. The issue for him was not one of recantation of his personal theological position. He asks: "What is the best course of action to take in a situation that had become totally irrational?" His essays, which came under attack were not meant to be the definitive position of the LCMS Scharlemann says. Instead, they were offered for examination and correction.

But attention should be called not solely to situations ten or more years ago. To be sure, some still think that Dr. Scharlemann was an early and open proponent of the historical-critical method, but whether the evidence at hand is sufficiently clear is still in dispute. Right now attention should be given to the fact that Dr. Scharlemann's teaching shows rejection of the historical-critical method as understood and demanded by President Tietjen and the faculty majority. In fact, many of the reasons why this writer opposes the historical-critical method he learned from Dr. Scharlemann. For Dr. Scharlemann, the assumptions and results of the historical-critical method as used at the seminary destroy, not support the Missouri Synod 125-year old confessional and Scriptural understanding. That Dr. Scharlemann and the faculty minority repudiate the historical-critical method used by Dr. Tietjen and many faculty members was never made so obvious as when vice-President Repp impugned their motives by saying that they did affirm the historical-critical method.

Preus-Repp-Scharlemann

The incident which sparked the now infamous Preus-Repp-Scharlemann confrontation occurred on March 10, 1972. On that day, the student newsletter Spectrum included a letter to the editor by Professor Robert Preus, brother of President Preus. Professor Preus wrote:

This is the first letter I have written to the Spectrum. I am compelled to write because of a statement of President Tietjen in his report to the student body after chapel last Monday. . . . he said that it was impossible for Dr. Ehlen to teach at a seminary level of instruction and take the texts of scripture with utter seriousness without using the so-called historical-critical method. He went on to say that it was also impossible for any other faculty member in any department to teach a course in biblical interpretation without using this method.

When I joined this faculty the so-called historical-critical method was not employed but generally rejected by this faculty. A couple of exegetes might have advocated using certain aspects of it, but this was all. Now after fifteen years, during which the method has been quietly and gradually brought in, we are told that it is impossible to do exegesis at a seminary without using it.

I must respond that as a called teacher at Concordia Seminary, committed to the sacred Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions, I cannot and will not use the historical-critical method as such for its false basic presuppositions and its false goals and conclusions. I have done this privately and publically and in every possible forum, in joint faculty meetings and before the Council of Presidents, in my classes, in papers delivered throughout the synod, in periodicals and books, and before our Board of Control. And I intend to do the same in the future in this school or any where else with the help of God. Robert Preus.

Immediate neoliberal reaction occurred in the form of a letter sent to all the faculty members by seminary vice-President Repp. Dr. Repp said:

It is evident from the almost universal acceptance of the historical-critical method by the faculty that the great majority now believe that this method is best suited, by which we can use the insights, tools and data now available to a committed Lutheran and to the world in this age. Since it is regarded as the best it is mandatory that Concordia Seminary employ it within the confessional confines of our commitment. Any other methodology today falls short of the best available. . . . This does not mean other methods could not be used also, they have been in the past with some good results, e.g., the methodology of St. Paul, Clement of Rome, Origen, the Antioch School, and the grammatical-linguistic method, provided they are used with Lutheran presuppositions. They might still be of value

under limited circumstances, but certainly not in a professional school of today. None of these meet the standards any longer if we want to take the text of the scriptures with utter seriousness. Obviously, not all agree with this, but the majority of the faculty does. . . . Use of aspects of the historical-critical method were given in Scharlemann's article in The Lutheran Quarterly of August 1959. . . .

Not only does Dr. Repp attempt to propagate a new neoliberal conclusion that the historical-critical method is better than the methodology of St. Paul ("might still be of limited value, but certainly not in a professional school of today"), but he also infers that professors either did not speak out against its use (mistakenly referring here to Professor Preus) or that they themselves used the method (mistakenly referring here to Dr. Scharlemann).

Dr. Scharlemann's reaction was not long in coming. He accused Dr. Repp of conveying a falsehood in saying that Dr. Scharlemann used the historical-critical method for his interpretation of the Scriptures. He wrote:

. . . To state that my essay on 'The Inerrancy of scripture' exhibits aspects of the historical-critical method is unadulterated theological nonsense. The paper discusses an issue that antedated the rise of the Historical-Critical Method by at least sixty years. Furthermore, the essay is an explicit rejection of that very notion of truth which is at the heart of the historical-critical method. . . .

How Dr. Repp can relate my essay on "Cumulative Revelation" to the use of the historical-critical method is beyond my comprehension. The essay is, in fact, an explicit rejection of a central concept of the historical-critical method; namely, progressive development. . . .

. . . there is quite a difference between faculty discussion of subjects and teaching them in class. I have never, in all the years I taught Hermeneutics, advocated the historical-critical method as a fully acceptable tool. In fact, I have usually made the point that it yields no theology. . . .

. . . it is at best a half-truth to say that no exegesis can be scholarly unless it adopts the historical-critical method. I mention this because that seems to be the current ploy around here. In point of fact, a good part of contemporary Biblical scholarship has gone beyond this. . . .

It is very difficult to see how things that occurred over a decade ago have any bearing on the problems that face us today. The joint meetings we had between the systematics and exegetical department of more recent date certainly made it abundantly clear to what low estate the exegetical enterprise had fallen among us as a theological discipline...

...there is nothing hidden or secret about the supplemental points made above. They were as available to Dr. Repp as they are to me. Fact is, he chose to leave them out and so created a document which it would be hard to equal for sheer bias. It is another way of obfuscating issues that keep plaguing us....

....it seems to be part of the current game to make as though the historical-critical method were something hard to define. In point of fact, the historical-critical method is a rather precise concept and is described as that method of interpretation which uses the criteria of scientific historical investigation to analyze the sacred texts, in terms of language literary form and redaction criticism, with a view to discovering how much of the 'historical' content of the event described can be recaptured. In this method, the text is a primary source for the time of writing and only secondary for the time of the occurrence described. There is a very broad consensus on this point among Biblical Scholars, I might add....

The above statements by Professors Preus-Repp-Scharlemann are important for a number of reasons. In the first place, in contrast to what Dr. Fuerbringer was always insisting on, Dr. Repp was intent to build a case for the use of the historical-critical method by the seminary long before Denver. But he is quite wrong in asserting that Professors Preus or Scharlemann condoned the use of the method. Second, the whole "dialogue" is a kind of mini-example of what the Synod is experiencing. Neoliberals falsely accusing; conservatives defending their good name; and neoliberals re-attacking at other points.

The three documents which comprised the Preus-Repp-Scharlemann confrontation were advantageously used by conservatives in St. Louis. One pastor made copies of all three documents and gave them to members of his congregation. His attached note read in part:

If you will read these three documents in their order, you will get a quick whiff of the corruption which prevails at Concordia Seminary.

You will see how the vice-president for academic affairs defies a resolution of the Cleveland Convention in 1962.

You will see how basic items are distorted, and to what extent pertinent matters are left out.

His [Dr. Repp's] 'Response' is a kind of seminary version of yellow journalism. And remember that the Faithful Five [faculty minority] have to live with this kind of misrepresentation all the time... These attached documents will offer you a good view of how things are. Repp's 'Response' was written to support the current ploy of the seminary administration that everybody uses the historical-critical method. That is what the Board of Control is being led to believe.

With the statements of the minority spreading throughout the Synod, the neoliberals realized that they were in danger of losing their control. In growing numbers congregations are not only eager to hear what has actually been going on at the seminary, but when informed they are shocked that things have gone so far. Thus the neoliberals were justifiably concerned over the expose of their stance. The neoliberals now resorted to launching the following attacks on the five: One was said to be the way he is because he is the brother of the President; another, because he wanted the presidency of the Seminary; another, because he was too old to know better; another, because he needed psychiatric aid; and another, because he wanted a higher position within the Synod.

Stomp-out

One particularly bold attempt at censorship of the conservative beliefs occurred on February 1, 1972. Professor Richard Klann, a member of the faculty minority, preached a sermon in the seminary chapel. His statements included:

Does anyone among us teach that Jews have another way to heaven, apart from Jesus Christ? If so, he is surely giving offense to the church, no matter how cleverly he teaches such a heresy.... The church of God is offended by those who call themselves 'moderates' and use the liberty proclaimed in the Gospel which St. Paul preached as a pretense for libertinism when they say, 'all things are lawful.' Therefore, no one should review their teaching and life. If The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod exhorts its members and teachers to shun false doctrines, some self-styled moderates have argued that the exhortations and resolutions of Synod are merely advisory--'All things are lawful.'

Such a sermon, going to the heart of the controversy at the seminary, had a decided effect on one group of neoliberals. Led by neoliberal Professor Herbert Mayer, a number of persons, including other professors, angrily stomped out of the chapel before the end of the service. In the student publication Spectrum the next day, an editorial attempted to offer some wisdom to those professors who had stomped out: "A number of people left chapel immediately in distress. Professor Klann prefers that his remarks be read in context, rather than as isolated quotations. Copies of the sermon will be available from his office." Although one neoliberal student attempted to cast doubts on the accuracy of the sermon copies, a group of students, who listened to the tape of the sermon, denied that any changes had been made which altered the sense of what was said.

If that were not enough, within a few minutes after chapel the word was around on what the neoliberal professors had done. Those students who had not been in chapel turned on their radios to hear what was so interesting about the whole thing. Unfortunately, they did not have the opportunity. Because in the meantime, Professors Deppe, Vincent, and Caemmerer had spoken to the responsible personnel at the seminary radio station, KFUE, and insisted that the sermon not be aired.

Such censorship was unbelievable, especially to conservative students who could not understand what was wrong with the sermon. Seeking to discover the reason for the censorship, this writer went over to KFUE. The person in charge stated that the three professors "had insisted that the sermon be taken off the air." After speaking to one of the professors responsible for that censorship, I wrote the following in the February 7, 1972, Spectrum: "Some of you wondered why Dr. Klann's sermon was not heard on KFUE. One of the professors who insisted that it not be heard, Professor Deppe--who, by the way, is on the Board of Control on KFUE--assured me that only because of Dr. Klann's reference to Jews and the possibility that a Jewish group might ask for equal time, did the necessity arise of making sure that the sermon was not aired over the radio."

In a subsequent Spectrum, Professor Deppe simply wrote that I had misrepresented his statements. In asking him how I did this, he objected to the words "insisted" and "only" because he had not "insisted" that what he told me was the "only" reason. At any rate, things were a little warm around the seminary for a few days, with the neoliberals attempting to keep their "tolerant" image intact while at the same time insisting that conservative views need to be censored for their theological stance.

The preceding sections dealing with the treatment of the minority five at the seminary and in the synod should make every Lutheran think twice before accepting the myth that neoliberals are basically tolerant whereas conservatives are not.

D GARBAGE IN, GARBAGE OUT

On September 1, 1972, pastors received the Report of the Synodical President to the Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod. Every person in the synod needs to read this Report in order to understand the depth of disagreement at the seminary between the faculty majority and the minority and between the neoliberal and conservative stance. Not long after, President John Tietjen sent a pamphlet entitled Fact Finding or Fault-Finding? to every pastor in synod. The title betrays the purpose of the pamphlet; namely, to make it appear that the Report of the Fact Finding Committee did not look for facts, but also found fault with the facts that were found.

Before we analyze the neoliberal objection to the Report, one must first understand that Dr. Tietjen's Fault-Finding did not even respond to the Report. Instead, it was a response to a preliminary document which few people had seen or even heard about. The November 1972 Affirm describes this previous document as consisting "of interviews and was intended only as a guide to the seminary Board of Control in working through hundreds of pages of transcripts. It was not the official and full report. So in a major sense, Fact-Finding Or Fault-Finding? doesn't really belong to the series of documents the church should consider in making a judgment on the seminary and its doctrinal stance." The seminary paid over \$5,000.00 to send it out.

Kent State

To begin with, there are some untruths contained in the pamphlet. In his Addendum, Dr. Tietjen speaks to the issues surrounding the Kent State and Jackson Memorial Service. The service was advertised as a memorial to those students and prisoners who had died at Kent State and Jackson prison. Announcement for the service mentioned that it would take place in the central quadrangle and that Roman Catholics from nearby Fontbonne would attend. In responding to the Fact Finding Committee's mention of this memorial service, Dr. Tietjen objected that the Committee "did not even do us the courtesy of finding out the 'facts' on which it is supposedly reporting. It is reporting as fact what did not in fact occur. There was no 'all night vigil,' there was no service in 'the Central Quadrangle.' There was no joint worship. The an-

nounced event was cancelled. Why didn't the Committee find out what really happened? They would have had one less case against the seminary."

When several students read what had been written, they sent a letter to the persons most affected by Dr. Tietjen's charge. The summary section of the letter stated:

That a service of worship (speaking to God, hearing Him respond) took place cannot be denied. Although technically it did not take place in the Quad, such a cop-out seems to miss the real issue. It did take place. President Tietjen and other professors (Kalin, Klein) were present and took part in speaking the worship litany, women presumably from Fontbonne, were present (unionistic), and there were those present who continued to remain awake during the whole night discussing the issues and taking action (witness--I myself remained with one group until six in the morning while another group spent their vigil in enclosing the Quad with barbed wire).

By the way, after the service, one of the speakers thanked President Tietjen for attending. At that time, President Tietjen made comments to the effect that he thanked this group for their work and thought that more of the students should be made aware of the war and its effects. His amiable personality and smiling countenance gave witness to the fact that he certainly did not disapprove of what was going on.

Fact-Finding Or Fault-Finding? also contained the usual assortment of neoliberal ambiguity. In defending the historical-critical method of interpretation, Dr. Tietjen wrote that it "does not postulate non-historicity or conflicting accounts of conflicting theologies." Such a statement was described as "playing with words" by Professor Huth once of the Springfield Seminary. Dr. Huth wrote that "technically, of course, it is true that the historical-critical method does not postulate, that is, assume in advance without evidence that there are such things in the Bible. But Dr. Tietjen omits to mention that those who use this method claim that they actually discover conflicting accounts and theologies in the Bible, and that anyone who uses this method must in principle expect to find such conflicts. He fails to point out that the use of this method invariably leads to the conclusions, allegedly based on irrefutable evidence, that there are conflicts in the Bible, and that then this 'conclusion' does in fact become a 'presupposition' for Bible Study."

Another Springfield professor, Dr. Harold Buls,

found that the term legalist or related words were used "no less than twenty-two times against the Investigating Committee.... These pages show a flagrant misuse of the word 'legalist' and betray the fact that the writer does not hold to the authority of the scriptures.... Dr. Tietjen's use of the word 'legalist' is plainly an attempt to put Dr. Preus and the Investigating Committee in a bad light. Make no mistake about it."

Unlutheran

The real bombshell contained in Dr. Tietjen's pamphlet was the contention that President Preus and the members of the Fact-Finding Committee are unlutheran and unscriptural. President Tietjen said in his opening remarks in the pamphlet that "it grieves me to say it, but the seminary investigation was prejudiced and unfair, produced unreliable results and a hopelessly distorted view of the faculty's position, and operated on the basis of unscriptural presuppositions of interpretation and unlutheran theological understandings." And this was said by the same man who in an open hearing at the Milwaukee Convention insisted that the seminary welcomed the investigation and that the investigation had been conducted fairly. One now understands why Professor Bohlmann cringed in astonishment when he heard those words at the convention. Dr. Tietjen pulled no punches and told what he really believed. He even described the Report as "garbage in, garbage out."

Dr. Tietjen's introductory letter to pastors, indicated that he had "grave misgivings about the doctrinal position of our adversaries, and we have some things to say to them about their doctrinal soundness." He is speaking about the members of the Fact Finding Committee. The next statement is most revealing: "We see a calculated effort under way to impose on the synod what the synod itself has never affirmed to be the doctrinal position of the synod." That is fantastic! A few years ago Dr. Fuerbringer insisted that what we have always taught is the conservative method of interpreting the scriptures. Now, a few years later, Dr. Tietjen is declaring that we have never taught the conservative position! Such declarations are too much even for neoliberal scholars in the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

We read in one publication: "As opposed to Dr. Tietjen's charge that President Preus is 'unlutheran' Jordahl [Professor in the Lutheran Church—America] states that President Preus' theological position is exactly what the Missouri Synod has always held." Dr. Leigh Jordahl makes clear that he is talking both about a method of interpreting

Scripture and the understanding of the Gospel. One's mind begins to boggle at the myth which the neoliberals have invented in order to cast all kinds of doubts on the possibility that conservatives are even Christians.

The final eye opener for the conservatives occurred in September 1972, when Dr. Tietjen told the Council of Presidents that the Fact Finding Committee had judged the faculty "on the basis of sub-Biblical and unlutheran theology." No longer was Dr. Tietjen content to agree with Dr. Frey's contention that differences of interpretation and definitions were allowable within the same fellowship. No, from Dr. Tietjen's point of view the conservative position was not only not allowable; it was unlutheran.

Fact Finding Committee

In a summary of his analysis of the Report, Dr. Tietjen concluded that the inquiry results were "unfair, unreliable, untrue, less than Scriptural and unlutheran." The Fact Finding Committee was not going to take these serious doctrinal charges lying down. The following appeared in the Spectrum on October 18, 1972:

In a report to The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod, members of the Fact Finding Committee have protested that the charge of 'a theology less than Lutheran' is unfounded. The reply--in response to St. Louis Concordia Seminary President John Tietjen's document 'Fact-Finding Or Fault-Finding'--was published in the October 15, 1972, issue of the Lutheran Witness, an official periodical of the Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod.

Commenting that the committee has endured in silence both abuse and misrepresentation for two years, it stated: 'We believe the time has come to speak out.... We must speak because President Tietjen has accused us of demonstrating a view of Scripture less than Scriptural. We protest that the charge is unfounded, and we stand with President Preus in his reply at the meeting of the District Presidents: 'This is a serious charge made to the entire church.... The charge must be either proved or retracted!' [The Committee confirmed:] 'Second, we must speak because President Tietjen's analysis confuses a confusing situation even further. Many will not realize that Dr. Tietjen does not speak [to the Report which President Preus made] to the church on the basis of our committee's findings [the Blue Document sent out on Sept. 1, 1972]. Instead President

Tietjen is using an analysis prepared by him prior to the issuance of Dr. Preus' Report and is really speaking to materials submitted by the Fact Finding Committee in June of 1971.

Unfortunately, President Tietjen also does not make it clear that the Fact Finding Committee (FFC) specifically indicated that the transcripts of the interviews were 'the definitive report' and that the summaries he criticizes were specifically limited by the committee to serving the board of control of the seminary as an introduction or guide to hundreds of pages of transcripts of interviews...

The Fact Finding Committee also is puzzled by President Tietjen's criticism of the committee's method of questioning. At the Synodical convention in Milwaukee in the summer of 1971 President Tietjen reported to the floor committee on the theological matters that he welcomes the investigation and that the investigation had been conducted properly. This was after all men had been interviewed with the exception of four men on leave. It is also a matter of record that on occasion when the Fact Finding Committee asked the professors whether they felt the questions were fair, they received affirmative answers. What President Tietjen describes as 'badgering' merely represented the committee's attempts to obtain clear and unequivocal answers to its questions and to prevent possible misunderstandings.

Stressing that the committee's "concern for the authority of the Scriptures springs from a desire to preserve the Gospel in its truth and purity," the committee asked the church "to set aside all rhetoric and simply confront the evidence and evaluate it on its own merits. The Fact Finding Committee did not manufacture any evidence. The transcripts quoted by President Preus in his report to the Synod are those examined and corrected by the faculty members themselves and sent to him by the board of control."

The October 15, 1972, Fact Finding Committee statement, quoted in part above, did not fall on deaf ears. Dr. John Baur wrote on December 4, 1972, that the neoliberal

"pet concern [was] about the behavior of the committee. In a way it's a clever ruse because it is well known that even among professing Christians attacks against persons, their ways and their motives, draw blood more readily than attacks against their findings. However, we are convinced that there is also another reason why President Tietjen

and others shy away from real attempts at refutation. They know that objective and scholarly refutation isn't possible because the position of the committee and of synod's President is precisely that of the synod for the past 125 years.

The verbose response of President Tietjen leaves the impression that he is more anxious to downgrade the President of synod and his committee than to get down to the task of proving in simple language that they are on the wrong track.

E FAITHFUL TO OUR CALLING: FAITHFUL TO OUR LORD

In early 1973, the faculty also released to the synod two booklets, representing statements of their beliefs. Part I of the first book, Faithful to Our Calling: Faithful to Our Lord contained a joint faculty statement. The second booklet contained individual statements of beliefs by the various professors. It is no surprise to discover that the signatures of all the faculty minority are missing from the joint statement. In fact, Dr. Robert Preus sent a letter with the request that his name be listed "as opposing the joint confession." A later interview with the seminary Spectrum produced a number of pages in which Professor Robert Preus enumerated his doctrinal and Scriptural objections to the "joint confession."

The Cleveland Press of January 22, 1973, stated that the booklet contained the faculty majority position "that Adam and Eve were not historical persons--in other words, they never existed." A far cry from the days of President Fuerbringer's comments to Presidents Behnken and Harms that all hold to scriptural truths. To the unsuspecting layman or pastor in the congregation, not conversant with the doctrinal issues involved, the two booklets sound quite orthodox. But anyone informed on what is at stake discerns how the neoliberals have changed the definitions of terms and the method of interpreting the Scriptures. He perceives that the two booklets clearly demonstrate how far the seminary authors of the book have moved to a rejection of the accepted Missouri Synod theology.

CTCR Evaluation

After two district presidents requested a theological evaluation of the faculty statements (Faithful to Our Calling: Faithful to Our Lord), the Commission on Theology and Church Relations (CTCR)

approved the appointment of a committee to analyze the statements. Although neoliberal district presidents strongly protested the CTCR's decision, because "this tempts one side or the other to use the CTCR as a political instrument for its own support (Info. April 1973)," sources close to the situation contend that the neoliberal district presidents were afraid that the CTCR would uphold the synodically-adopted doctrinal position of the 125-year-old synod; thereby, criticizing the faculty majority statements. It was not long before these neoliberal fears were realized. The conclusion of An Evaluation of the Faculty Document "Faithful To Our Calling, Faithful To Our Lord. Part I: A Witness To Our Faith" follows:

If the purpose of the discussion forums being held through synod is to promote unity through a truly Lutheran settlement of the issues in debate, then, in light of the foregoing statements, we believe that unless its serious inadequacies are pointed out, this document is not suitable for use in these forums. (Adopted March 28, 1973 by the Commission on Theology and Church Relations)

The CTCR was not alone in its criticism of the faculty majority documents. Even those outside the synod recognized the inadequacy of Faithful To Our Lord:

Whether one agrees or disagrees with synod President Preus' interpretation of his right and/or duty to investigate, and whether one accepts or rejects the majority statement of the Concordia faculty as an adequate presentation of the essentials of the Christian position, it is hard to dispute one thing: in the context of the Concordia crisis, the 'Affirmation in Two Parts' answers a number of questions that have not been asked and leaves unanswered most of those that have.

(Christianity Today, February 2, 1973)

F. ARLIS J. EHLEN

In the later part of 1971 a number of professors' contracts came up for renewal at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis. One man looking for a renewal was Professor of Old Testament theology, Arlis J. Ehlen. After Dr. Ehlen answered questions addressed to him by the Board of Control and President Preus, the Board of Control decided not to renew Dr. Ehlen's contract. There was the definite indication that members of the Board of Control realized that Professor Ehlen denied certain miraculous elements of the crossing of the Red Sea. The Board of Control later allowed Dr. Ehlen to continue teaching for one year for the dubious reason that he could take part in discussions.

Compromise

But President Tietjen refused to follow President Preus' request that Dr. Ehlen not be allowed to teach the historical-critical method. A compromise was reached a few weeks later. On April 21, 1972, President Preus spoke about the compromise in the student Spectrum, saying, he trusted that "under the ministering influence of Dr. Tietjen, higher critical views will not be sympathetically expounded in courses which will be taught by Dr. Ehlen... So it is in this light that I publicly express my appreciation to both Dr. Tietjen and the Board of Control." Sad to say, Dr. Ehlen not only refused to abide by the compromise but he even publicly proclaimed to the secular press that he would continue to use the historical-critical method of interpretation in the classroom.

Members of the Board of Higher Education refused to concur with the Board of Control's renewal of Dr. Ehlen's contract for another year. The Board of Control decided to continue to pay Dr. Ehlen's salary for the year, even though he was no longer a member of the staff of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis.

For neoliberal editor Koenig, the non-renewal of Dr. Ehlen's contract was "the first time the theological issues dividing the two parties stand clearly revealed." Editor Koenig and the Forum continued criticism that President Preus has not made the literature and interpretation of Old Testament his field of specialization and no Old Testament scholars are on the Board, "so the dismissal of Dr. Ehlen was not wise. Pastor Koenig seems to forget that his own qualifications without a PhD for judging are very untenable.

Rev. C. Wildermuth of Battle Ground, Washington, wrote the Forum (supported by American Lutheran Publications Bureau, ALPB): "I think we have come to the parting of the ways. I have been a supporter of ALPB for 30 years or more, though it, for the most part, had an anti-Missouri bias. But of late your one delight is to lambast and defame Missouri and especially 'Old Missouri.' Because Preus stands four-square on Scripture, he must go, and those that hold to the historical-critical method must prevail. Just last week I talked to two recent graduates, both pro-Ehlen, who, however, admitted that for the life of them they could not find out from what he taught what he himself believed. God forbid that a man who is not sure about the angels or the devil, and who doesn't believe in miracles should be the teacher of my future pastor."

The neoliberal use of the historical-critical

method was not new to Dr. Ehlen. Long before, a former professor recalls that Dr. Ehlen "denied the Mosaic authorship." Dr. Ehlen told him that "no one who is scholarly believes it." Dr. Ehlen also allowed for the denial of Messianic prophecies in the Old Testament. The professor wrote a protest to vice-President Repp, but Dr. Repp replied that he found no grounds for a protest.

Ambiguities

A linguistic problem recurring in the Dr. Ehlen affair centers in the ambiguity of Dr. Ehlen's position. That ambiguity is well contained in President Tietjen's statement that Dr. Ehlen "has stated that he affirms the facticity of what the Scriptures intend to present as facts." At first blush this would mean that Dr. Ehlen believes that at the Red Sea crossing, the land became dry. But Dr. Ehlen does not insist on this as the interpretation. In fact, in one of his classes, he even permitted the possibility that the Israelites may have crossed the Red Sea in boats.

In a chapel sermon of January 7, 1972 Dr. Ehlen says that he recognized his calling and appointment "to draw even the source criticism of the Red Sea narrative or the form criticism [neoliberal historical-critical methodology] of the Jonah story into the illuminating orbit of the Gospel. And I know that by this continual proclamation of God's covenant of promise the bondage of ignorance and legalism is being diminished and the zone of freedom is ever widening." What Dr. Ehlen is saying is that as long as one keeps the Gospel point of the narrative, then there is no need to be very concerned whether the happenedness of the event occurred in that manner or in another.

Dr. Ehlen's ambiguous teachings seemed to blind even some students. Seminarian C. R. Knight on December 15, 1972, wrote that even Dr. Ehlen would be surprised to learn that he said, "the crossing of the sea was no miracle." Mr. Knight is naive to believe that Dr. Ehlen insists on the literal interpretation of the Red Sea miracle. Certainly Dr. Ehlen affirms that some kind of miracle occurred (that Israel did escape); what he questions is the conservative affirmation of a specific miracle at the Red Sea; namely the dry land and the large wall of water.

On April 18, 1972, the seminary faculty majority reaffirmed its support of President Tietjen in connection with the Ehlen controversy. A few weeks prior to that time, President Tietjen had attempted to rally student support behind Dr. Ehlen. At the Wednesday morning convocation, President

Tietjen and Dr. Ehlen related to the seminary community the incidents that led to Ehlen's contract not being renewed. After the information convocation was dismissed, possibilities for action were considered by the students who remained.

Faculty minority Professor Martin Scharlemann, in the same edition of the Spectrum criticized that convocation for the following reasons:

(1) It was puzzling to see so much made of the Board's executive session and yet have one individual [Dr. Ehlen] talk rather freely about what happened there; (2) It was puzzling to hear such an emphasis on one's calling and yet see a constant effort to go beyond the call any one has at the Seminary to try to show how the President of Synod should carry out his call; (3) It was shocking to hear, both before and after the convocation from individuals, certain denigrating and derogatory remarks about the President of the Synod in his absence. (Do the Fourth and Eighth Commandments really mean that little among us?)

Part of the neoliberal strategy in the Ehlen controversy appeared to have Dr. Ehlen pictured as if his theology were not any different from the theology of any other professor. Even the students, including seminarian Roschke, son of one of the neoliberal members of the Board of Control of the seminary, said that Dr. Ehlen's "methodology and presuppositions are regarded as the same as the rest of the department." That was not true. Professor Martin Scharlemann, also a member of the exegetical department, completely repudiated the historical-critical method as used by Dr. Ehlen and his faculty majority colleagues.

The non-renewal of Dr. Ehlen's contract was not the end of the controversy. Since the Board of Control generously granted Dr. Ehlen a one year free salary, he was "paid" to go around the country espousing his peculiar views. Once Dr. Ehlen's contract was not renewed, neoliberal leaders (including some District Presidents) set up many meetings for Dr. Ehlen to attend.

Portage Michigan

Two such meetings occurred in Michigan in December 1972. The second meeting was in Portage. Three laity with this writer attended. Our impression of that meeting can best be summarized by a letter which the four of us felt had to be sent to proper officials. The occasion for sending the letter was the reputed report by St. Louis Professor Repp that the two appearances of Dr. Ehlen in Michigan were "great triumphs." The conclusion

read:

Because of the small number of persons attending the lecture; because of the substantial minority of persons who publicly rebuked Dr. Ehlen, because of our personal belief that Dr. Ehlen did not answer questions in an open and clear manner; because we feel that Dr. Ehlen misrepresented the doctrinal controversy through misapplying history, setting up straw-men, and the speaking of untruths--eg., that all professors in the exegetical department at St. Louis use the historical-critical method as demanded by the administration (See Scharlemann); and finally because we have a tape recording by which we can refute the above statement by Dr. Repp that the speaking engagements of Dr. Arlis Ehlen in Michigan were a "great triumph," we believe that Dr. Ehlen's statements were an evasion and circumvention of facts because his presentation was a misleading interpretation.

It would have been one thing had Dr. Ehlen limited his ideas to members of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. But in some of the areas where he spoke, for some reason the newspapers felt a compelling need to interview him. Dr. Ehlen was quoted by the Detroit News on November 6, 1972: "More and more pastors are coming to recognize that unlutheran and unjust approaches have been taken by the Synod administration." Dr. Ehlen was also quoted by the Denver Post that "although Scriptural differences with the president of the denomination which owns the school were the surface issues, politics was the underlying issue." The Rocky Mountain News quoted Dr. Ehlen as asserting that "the issue really is not so much how I treat the Scriptures as of who shall be in control of the Seminary."

A recent development in the ongoing Ehlen controversy is mentioned and analyzed by the April 30, 1973 edition of Christian News:

...Arlis Ehlen, controversial champion of the destructive historical-critical method of interpreting Scripture, has hired a lawyer. Apparently he has been advised that he actually had permanent tenure on the St. Louis Seminary faculty when his contract was not renewed last year. This is an interesting development in the light of the fact that not President Preus, but Dr. Tietjen, his defender, and the Board of Control majority who are solidly in Tietjen's hip pocket are the very ones who, after much confused quarreling, gave him only a year's contract. Preus of course contested the reappointment entirely. If the apparently impossible claim of Dr. Ehlen should stand, the Synod at New Orleans

will have no other choice, if it is to maintain any control over the insurgent faculty, than to close the seminary. How else can a church settle the problems of a liberal [neoliberal] faculty, when members are willing to sue the church body to which they belong?

G AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF THEOLOGICAL SCHOOLS (AATS)

On June 3, 1972, the St. Louis Post Dispatch reported that Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, had been placed "on two years academic probation by the American Association of Theological Schools." As the article points out, the action by the AATS occurred shortly after Dr. Ehlen's contract was not renewed.

The AATS gave these reasons for its action: "(1) Adequate authority of the Board of Control is not guaranteed by ecclesiastical structures of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod for the Seminary to carry on its educational function as a graduate professional school of theology; (2) The freedom of faculty to teach and publish research is circumscribed in ways not defined in the terms of a contract of employment; (3) Attention of students, faculty and administration is unduly diverted to matters unrelated to education for the ministry."

Of course, it did not matter to the AATS that the synodical convention at Milwaukee in 1971 gave President Preus hearty support for his inquiry or that the Commission on Constitutional Matters agreed that the President of the synod has the power to make an inquiry into the teaching of the professors at synodical schools. The AATS Requirements for the removal of probation by June 1, 1974, were:

- (1) That the Board of Control of the Seminary has both in legal structure and in practice the determination of policy and the responsibility for the operation of the seminary;
- (2) That there is adequate procedural protection of the academic freedom of faculty in the confessional context of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod; and
- (3) That the life and work of Concordia Seminary is carried on under conditions that are conducive to education for ministry.

Neoliberal Notations

Notations are statements of concern by the AATS in addition to the requirements for removal of probation. The following notations clearly give evidence that the AATS acted under neoliberal in-

fluence and control. As you read these notations, remember that Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, is supposed to be a seminary owned, operated and controlled by the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

N 4.3--Faculty members of this school are unduly diverted from their essential task; N 4.8--The health of this school is impaired by a lack of academic freedom of its members to do their work N 5.3--In this school, politics are unduly determined by others than the trustees or faculty; N 8.1 -- In this school, the general tone is such that its capacity to provide significant theological education and ministerial training is impaired.

The neoliberals made full use of what they called this "embarrassment" to the synod. Stating that millions of dollars had been spent in order to obtain accreditation (much of that being spent on the books needed for an acceptable library) the neoliberals implied that the whole fabric of theological education in the whole of synod would be destroyed if the probation was not removed.

One wonders how the seminary ever got into the position of being accredited by the AATS, which insisted (as it did at the time of accreditation) that "academic policies be handled by administration and faculty under the independent board." Did not the administration of the seminary realize that the school was part of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod? Only too well. In fact, when the seminary had been given accreditation in 1963, the AATS had pointed out "that the synodical structures created a possibility of policies being unduly determined by parties other than the trustees or faculty."

When Dr. Ehlen's contract was not renewed, the AATS incident afforded the perfect opportunity to embarrass and make fools of the synodical administration. But then it backfired. The neoliberal propaganda machinery asserted that the AATS commission on accrediting voted a two-year probation for the seminary when Dr. Ehlen was "dismissed by the Board for Higher Education in May 1972 (Info, April 1973)." The same issue of Info stated that in order for the synod to retain accreditation, "it must return to some kind of administrative arrangement in which the duly elected Board of Control and the faculty can go about their work without undue interference."

Info's misrepresentation of the situation centers on the fact that Dr. Ehlen was not "dismissed" by the Board for Higher Education. Rather, the contract of Dr. Ehlen was not renewed by the BHE. Not only does the Handbook make clear that the Board of Control of the seminary can only appoint members of the faculty "with the prior consent of

the Board for Higher Education", but it is a fact that the AATS is well aware of such a provision.

The conservative reaction went to the heart of the AATS action in telling the AATS that the seminary belonged to the synod, not to some accrediting agency or faculty majority. Conservatives pointed out that before 1964 students had encountered no problem in getting their credits accepted at other schools for graduate studies. The conservatives realized that the threat of losing accreditation was the choice between secular accreditation and the Word of God.

Involvements

Academic officials at the seminary early voiced concerns that the inquiry could lead to loss of accreditations (St. Louis Post Dispatch, March 1, 1972). Shocking was the fact that the officials of the AATS included the associate executive secretary of the AATS, David Schuller (a former neoliberal professor at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis) who was vice-president of the AATS and a member of the executive board of the AATS and Professor Arthur C. Repp, vice-president of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis. Since the AATS action, a new member of the AATS executive board is Concordia Seminary President John Tietjen. Such involvements must be noted.

Even though the neoliberal publication Info attempted to play down the part which Professor Repp and David Schuller had in the AATS probation action, it is a known fact that Dr. Repp spoke to Dr. Jesse Ziegler, administrative head of AATS on the phone that day that Dr. Ehlen's contract was not renewed. The next day, AATS put the St. Louis Seminary on probation.

Besides the neoliberal denial that Dr. Repp and David Schuller were involved in the decision to put the seminary on probation, another neoliberal assertion was that "the problem which the AATS has called to our attention is administrative, not doctrinal (Info)." How is it that the President of the synod cannot intervene in the affairs of a seminary, especially when the constitution and synod in convention allows and asks that he do so? Is the use of the historical-critical method at the seminary really an administrative problem? It was not long before congregations and even districts took exception to what the AATS had done.

It was clear from the Handbook of synod that being a professor at a seminary owned by the LCMS did not entitle one to unlimited academic freedom. 6.53d says that "limitations of academic freedom because of the religious nature and aim for the in-

stitution should be stated in writing at the time of the appointment and conveyed to the person being appointed." While this refers specifically to an individual appointment, this shows that the By-Laws recognizes a limitation of academic freedom on the basis of the theological and doctrinal commitment on the institution of the synod.

Michigan Resolution

A typical resolution voted by one incensed conservative district is Resolution 4-05 from the Proceedings of the 85th Convention, Michigan District. Parts of it read:

Whereas, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod has been organized to establish and maintain theological seminaries and colleges in order to train ministers and teachers for service in its congregations....

Whereas, The AATS makes a theological judgment in the question whether a certain professor has gone beyond the limits of Lutheran doctrine, despite its Constitution which states that it will not involve itself in doctrinal matters of a denomination;

Resolved, that the Michigan District in convention encourage the President of Synod and Synod's Board for Higher Education to remind the AATS to keep true to its Constitution by not involving itself in doctrinal matters of a denomination; and be it further

Resolved, That in answer to the Faculty's appeal for help to remedy the situation we remind them of the synod's will to supervise the doctrinal standards of our theological schools through the Board of Control, Board for Higher Education, and the Synod's President on the basis of the Synod's historic position in doctrine and practice.

The neoliberal contact men in the Michigan area continued to discredit President Preus. Pastor Raymond Moelter, neoliberal district contact man for Michigan, wrote his fellow neoliberals asking that they be "one of the 3,000 to write your disapproval of the procedure [the inquiry] that led to the St. Louis Seminary's embarrassment of probation by the AATS."

Pastor Moelter's June 13, 1972 memo to neoliberal men in the district demonstrates clearly the relationship between district neoliberals and synodical neoliberal leaders. On the AATS matter, Moelter presented the plan for action:

It has been requested and outlined in correspondence from Chicago [Frey/Lueking], (a)

Massive letter response from clergy and laity. Originals should go to President J. A. O. Preus, carbon copies should be sent to the BHE [Board for Higher Education] and the Board of Control, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis. Keep in mind that the loss of accreditation at St. Louis will cause the loss of accreditation at Springfield." [This is a complete neoliberal fabrication without any basis of proof.] Threatened also will be the accreditation of our teacher's colleges and other synodical schools. [This also is untrue since those schools are under different accrediting agencies than AATS. In fact, Fort Wayne Concordia Senior College had its accreditation reissued since that time!] Without accreditation our Seminary graduates will be precluded admittance to programs of clinical pastoral education. They will be seriously hampered as they apply for admission to graduate study in accredited schools and for scholarships and fellowships. [Obviously, another misrepresentation since for the many years prior to 1964, such was not the case. And there are many other unaccredited schools whose graduates today find no problem in getting their credits accepted for study at accredited graduate schools.]

H BOARD OF CONTROL

The Board of Control of the St. Louis Seminary is seriously divided with a majority edge for the neoliberal members of the Board. Although this slight edge does not meet the expectations of the August 30-31, 1970, neoliberal meeting to put "at least five more of their kind on the Board of Control of the St. Louis Seminary," the slight edge does accomplish neoliberal goals.

Chairman Loose

The board's chairman, Pastor George Loose, did not hesitate to publicly criticize President Preus. In a newsletter to his congregation on April 1, 1972, Dr. Loose spoke of a "well organized minority which has used political methods to gain control of lay boards and committees of synod. Their greatest success was in defeating Dr. Oliver Harms and electing Dr. Preus president of synod at Denver." He stated that the action of Dr. Preus since his election has not only been "political" but also "is obnoxious to some of us."

In support of the neoliberal myth that the issue is "not whether some are 'conservative' or 'liberal,'" Dr. Loose says that the "issue is a power-

grab by a well organized minority." To brand such statements as misrepresentations would be most charitable. Using the neoliberal banner of "freedom under the Gospel," Loose prays that "we may be strong to resist all attempts to centralize power and take away our freedom in the Gospel." Everyone realizes that neoliberals are working to keep control of the seminary. For Dr. Loose to brand conservative desires as threats of "papistic tendencies," yet at the same time to remain silent about neoliberal political maneuvering is most unfair.

The reason for the newsletter soon became obvious. Even though Dr. Loose's congregation is in Pompano Beach, Florida, an editorial repeating much of what he said appeared in the St. Louis Post-Dispatch on May 5, 1972. To deny that Dr. Loose's attack against Preus is politically-motivated is to ignore that a letter addressed to a congregation in Florida appeared in a newspaper in St. Louis.

The reaction of faculty minority Professor Martin Scharlemann after meeting with the Board of Control is typical of conservatives everywhere. He stated in the April 19, 1972, Spectrum, that, in his opinion, the Board of Control was not willing to face the central issue in the debate at the seminary. Although conservatives on the Board of Control attempted to do all they could to return the seminary to the conservative LCMS 125-year-old theological stance, neoliberals and middle-of-the-roads on the board continually dashed such hopes.

It is no surprise to read a minority report by the conservative members of the Board of Control in the Report on the inquiry. These minority members made it clear that neoliberal members of the Board not only were not interested in the theological issues, but that they were very unfair by hearing only one side of the issue.

Most revealing are the comments of board member Charles Burmeister after the Board of Control has studied the teachings at the seminary for some time. He wrote on July 27, 1972:

After my own complete reading of all FFC [Fact-Finding Committee] transcripts, I am personally convinced that our faculty has more and more isolated itself from the grass-roots of everyday church members' thinking.... The idea that historical-critical methodology and all of its involvement can be left go unharnessed beyond the confines of classroom walls in what now seems to be somewhat of a cavalier fashion, to me is incredibly disintegrating.... Can we risk creating further doubts and disillusionment by continuing as though nothing, but nothing is wrong?

One Viewpoint

During the course of the Board's deliberations on the results of the inquiry, a few professors were asked to give lectures on certain theological questions. The minority report of the Board of Control states: "With the exception of the 'debate' on the historical-critical method, the faculty participants have been exponents of ONE viewpoint [the neoliberal one, of course]... We further note that substantial portions of some presentations did not deal with current theological issues and to that extent consumed valuable time of the Board. For example, the first presentation on the historical-critical method dealt in large part with the way the Passion is reported in the four Gospels..."

These statements are crucial for two very important reasons. The first is that views of conservative professors appeared to be continually censored. The second is that some of the lectures given by the neoliberals to the Board of Control were most ambiguous. We recall that Dr. Ehlen's talks around the country can be criticized for setting up a straw-man kind of conservative and then shooting him down as well as discussing the topic of Law and Gospel in a manner with which few indeed would disagree.

The same is true of discussions with the Board of Control. The lecture dealing with the Passion was also delivered by Professor Edgar Krentz before interested students. After he had completed it, this writer told him and the students present that what he had said was not at all the historical-critical method of interpretation as taught in class. Parts of his lecture did discuss aspects of the method, but in the actual demonstration with the verses of scripture, there was a complete avoidance of the real issue. Instead, the historical-grammatical traditional LCMS method of interpretation was used.

This is important to realize since this same lecture is being used by Dr. Krentz in many meetings. Part of his lecture deals with what he calls the ten frequently voiced objections to the historical-critical method in interpreting the scriptures (Info, April 1973). Even with a casual reading, the conservative will discover that "objections" 1 and 2 are straw-men, rarely if ever heard in LCMS circles, while Dr. Krentz answers "objections" 3 through 10 with insufficient clarity.

For example, objection 5 is that "historical-criticism destroys the unity of the Bible." Dr. Krentz answers this "objection": "It may not support some ideas of what the unity is, but will support the unity that is indeed there (Info April 1973)." Such an "answer" misses the real bone of

contention in the conservative objection. The conservative objects to the historical-critical teaching that the unity of the Bible does not mean that the Bible is without error when it narrates historical incidents. For neoliberals at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, the unity of the Bible is not tampered with when one teaches that the Bible contains errors. It is this neoliberal teaching to which conservatives object and which Dr. Krentz conveniently sidesteps with his ambiguous "answer."

When Dr. Krentz finishes his lecture the comment is usually reported, even among unwary conservatives: "Well, if that is all what the historical-critical method is, what is all the fuss over?" What is not realized is that the historical-critical method as taught in the classroom, as demanded by President Tietjen, and as insisted on for good scholarship, is more than, much more than what Professors Ehlen, Krentz, and Smith present before conferences and meetings.

For Dr. Ehlen to say (as he did) that the historical-critical method as he describes it, is the same which Martin Luther used, and for conservatives in the field to wonder what is wrong with the historical-critical method after hearing Dr. Krentz, is more than enough evidence that both men are considerably less than open in their presentation of what is taught in class. It is not that what they say is not taught in class; the point is that what they do not say is most certainly taught in class. For Dr. Ehlen to give the impression, as he does, that he also insists on the historicity of Adam and Eve and for Dr. Krentz to think, as he does, that questions dealing with the historicity or happenedness of what took place during the Passion is unimportant, is not only ambiguous; it is deceptive.

That the minority members of the Board of Control recognized the above fact (Report, p. 140) is certainly a credit to their acumen. But that the majority of the Board of Control remained blind or just didn't care about the neoliberal theology is obvious from what happened in February 1973.

The Board of Control again by means of majority vote concluded its examination of the Fact Finding Report and stated that there was no false teaching at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis! The neoliberals were delighted; the conservatives were astonished... until... the facts of the voting were revealed. Of all the professors in the total faculty who were individually voted on, only one received a unanimous vote by the Board of Control that he taught no false teachings. And he is said to be a member of the minority faculty.

President Preus' assessment of the Board's inaction follows:

First the church should note that the Board of Control was divided in making this decision to commend the faculty. The published report referred to the decision of the 'majority' of the Board of Control. It is significant that as the board passed on the orthodoxy of each professor in several cases the majority and minority differed by only one vote and in other cases by only two. From this it is evident that the board was less than clear in its mind as to the proper stance to take on the issues before it. Only one man received a unanimous vote to be commended. In all other cases at least one board member either voted to 'correct' or abstained. Although 45 were voted on and commended, only 29 were interviewed.

It is also striking that the Board of Control 'commended' as holding no false doctrine both the faculty majority and the faculty minority, despite the fact that the minority has charged that there are basic theological differences within the faculty and that false doctrine is involved.

Yet the report of the Board of Control says: 'Since the Board did not have before it charges of false doctrine against any faculty member, the Board did not consider the interview process to be an investigation of charges of false teaching.'

This statement of the Board of Control is most difficult to understand, for the Board of Control had before it the 160-page 'Report of the Synodical of President' based on the careful work of the Fact Finding Committee. On page 25 of this formal report of the synodical president, I noted six specific problems, the first of which reads, 'A false doctrine of the Holy Scriptures coupled with methods of interpretation which effectually erode the authority of the Scriptures.' On pages 146-147 the synodical president specifically named President Tietjen and asked the board to 'deal personally and first of all' with him. The synodical president also indicated that the other professors to be dealt with 'can be determined readily by the Board of Control from the transcripts. Moreover, others within the past twelve months, both without and within the faculty, have called false doctrine to the attention of the board. All of this makes the board's statement most difficult to comprehend. It is not rendered easier by the great brevity of the board's report, which runs just over four pages. No evidence is submitted by the board for the church to study and evaluate over against the massive evi-

dence compiled by the Fact Finding Committee. (Brother To Brother, April 27, 1973)

It was not uncommon that boards were divided on certain issues. But never has there been a time in the history of the 125-year-old LCMS when the polarization on faculties, boards of control and other groups throughout the synod has been such that one side is accusing the other of being unlutheran and unscriptural. In these days of theological division, which touches even our understanding of the Gospel, the wonder is that all boards, agencies, faculties, and the like are not seriously divided. It is difficult to find a unanimous group of people on any board in synod. Obviously, the situation cannot remain this way for long. The synod must decide for or against the historical-critical method and the neoliberal takeover of synod, and then action must be loving, honest, swift, and clear.

II THE SPRINGFIELD SEMINARY

There are those who say that once neoliberals get a foothold in the synod, it becomes only a matter of time before every program, every committee and every institution falls into their hands. Although Concordia Junior College, Ann Arbor is probably one of the strongest schools still remaining in the conservative, traditional 125-year-old Missouri orbit, Concordia Theological Seminary, Springfield is a close second.

The rivalry between the two seminaries--the one in St. Louis and the other in Springfield is well known. But only in recent years has the rivalry changed from one of kindly banter to deep, sincere repudiation of one another's position.

One is hard pressed on the surface to find the vast gulf of theological diversity separating the two, but other indications point to the way of reality. For instance, the Springfield Board of Control has decided to use the Statement of Confessional and Scriptural Principles as a criterion for analyzing a professor's teachings, in stark contrast to the St. Louis Board who rejected it. Again, in stark contrast to the St. Louis president, the Springfield president has publicly proclaimed his theology as conservative; thereby, repudiating not only neoliberal teaching, but also the stance taken by the faculty majority at St. Louis; namely, that the historical-critical method must be taught in the classroom.

Not too many years ago most students went from the Senior College in Fort Wayne directly to the St. Louis Seminary. At this time, more and more are deciding that the Springfield Theological Seminary is

the place to go. It is a fact that in the last two classes out of the Senior College, more than twenty students decided to go to Springfield for the express reason of not wanting to take their chances with the neoliberal St. Louis Seminary.

Disrespect

One particularly clear indication of the depth of disrespect which St. Louis professors have toward Springfield professors occurred in January 1972. A group of St. Louis seminarians were discussing the use of the historical-critical method of interpretation. This writer observed that the use of the method could not be all that universal since professors at Springfield were continually attacking it. Professor Rohr Sauer immediately retorted that "no one at Concordia Theological Seminary, Springfield, is qualified or able to understand and teach the historical-critical method." He was reminded that just recently, the St. Louis faculty had certified Dean Wenthe and allowed him to take a call as professor at Springfield. Professor Sauer then replied that, especially Dean Wenthe did not know what the historical-critical method is.

Unfortunately, our conversation ended then. But Dr. Sauer's words seemed so harsh, that this writer sent him the following note: "I thought it quite cruel to state that no one at Concordia Theological Seminary, Springfield, and especially Dean Wenthe, is qualified or able to understand and teach the historical-critical method. For example, not only did Dean Wenthe concentrate on exegesis at the seminary, not only were his marks of the highest caliber, but also, as far as I know, no faculty member here voiced objection to his call to Springfield. If Dean is not capable of understanding the method, then it would appear a waste of time to attempt to use that same method in classes composed of many students with less than a 3.50 (A-). Personally, I believe it possible to understand the method objectively without agreeing with its use." To this day I have not received a reply from Professor Sauer.

The St. Louis Seminary poll, conducted shortly after President Tietjen's arrival uncovered a great deal of trust in the Springfield Seminary, but not in the St. Louis institution. Only two-thirds of the respondents would agree that St. Louis Seminary was true to sound Lutheran principles, whereas, "by contrast, somewhat over 95% feel that Springfield is deserving of Synod support, and over 88% feel that Springfield is true to Lutheran principles." This fact can easily explain the concerns of the neoliberals at the August 30-31, 1970, River Forest meeting, "to try to exchange instructors between

the St. Louis and Springfield Seminaries to influence Springfield to become more liberal."

III RIVER FOREST TEACHERS COLLEGE

Although one could write another book on how the synodical schools are quickly being overrun by neoliberals, the example of River Forest must suffice. Even in 1965 conservative professors were concerned over the neoliberal tendencies of some of their colleagues.

We need not go any further than into the theological neoliberalism of Dr. Walter Bouman during his professorship at River Forest. But Professor Bouman was not the only neoliberal. A student writes that one professor asked: "How do you know you were not once an ape or monkey? Who was there at the time of creation?" Her letter's last sentence is not surprising: "...The professor made comments throughout the course which just left me, so to speak, 'hanging in the air!'"

In a number of cases, students of conservative families have become neoliberal, some going into the teaching profession, while others were lost to it because of lack of interest. Some retained their faith but had a difficult time emotionally and spiritually.

A former District LWML President wrote on March 7, 1973:

The daughter of our [present] District LWML President has just come home from River Forest. She is so discouraged with the teachings there. She had written her family all year concerning the teachings but after two rounds of falling ill due to emotional upset in most part, the family permitted her to return home to enroll in college locally. She said, 'How can I teach children differently from what I was taught as a child.' She said that she was told that the Bible stories she learned were not correct and her instructor gave a different version. This is the first one I have talked to from River Forest, but I have several relatives who have dropped out of three different schools. I am appalled at the stories concerning the conduct of the teachers and the students at our church schools."

Already seven years ago a pastor and his wife experienced their son leaving River Forest and refusing to go back, but not before he had almost lost his faith in the classroom. Also, he had been a student used by River Forest to speak for recruitment purposes. He took employment with a trucking agency and refused to go back to any synodical school

after several years because he told his parents that his faith is too precious for him to lose at LCMS schools where the neoliberal historical-critical method of interpreting Scripture is being taught. Many other students to a lesser degree have been disturbed, resulting in unhappy experiences for them, their parents, and their home congregations.

The statements by Lawrence Marquardt, former members of the Board of Control of River Forest, in a 1969 talk at the Springfield Seminary are most revealing: "Much to my surprise I found that at River Forest there is little or no desire to uphold the standards, especially theological, and to deal squarely with issues. I've discovered how, for the sake of harmony, error is tolerated."

IV ENGLISH DISTRICT

In addition to synod's schools, the neoliberals are especially interested in the takeover of an entire district's administration. Although there are few individual districts (eg., Atlantic and California-Nevada Districts) which are controlled by neoliberal presidents or administrators, one that is almost completely controlled by neoliberals is the English District--the "Synod within a Synod."

Former President Bertwin L. Frey's refusal to be bound by synodical doctrine as well as his important place of leadership in the neoliberal political machinery attest to his stance. That the present administration is openly neoliberal is no secret at all. President John H. Baumgaertner is well known not only for his anti-Missouri doctrine, but also for his personal attacks on President Preus. The following is an example.

Attacking President Preus, Pastor Baumgaertner sent out an open letter in which he refused to agree that the Statement of Scriptural and Confessional Principles was helpful; instead it threatened, he said "to stifle... freedom within the framework of the Lutheran Confessions to search the Scriptures." Once one understands the neoliberal connotations of "freedom," President Baumgaertner's neoliberalism is obvious.

In April 1972, a group of pastors sent an open letter to President Baumgaertner deploring his public letter against the "evangelical and proper Statement of the Missouri Synod President." Already, the Statement which Preus had sent out to the synod as an example of conservative theology in contrast to neoliberal false teachings, was beginning to clear the air as to who stood where.

tor - At - Large

Many persons have wondered how the English District became so neoliberal. While it is true that there are a strong minority of conservative congregations within the English District, it is a fact that they are a minority. Due to the "pastor-at-large" status of the English District, many neoliberals whose contracts have not been renewed for synodical positions of authority, or who are teaching at heterodox schools outside the Missouri Synod, can remain a pastor in the English District of the LCMS. Some of these men are Dr. Martin Marty, Dr. Richard Jungkuntz, and Dr. Wifall. In fact, a quick glance at the names of men in top leadership roles in the neoliberal political machinery will lead to the discovery that a large percentage of them are from the English District.

In contrast to most of the districts which sent conservative resolutions to synodical conventions, the English District is known for its reputation of sending neoliberal memorials to conventions. The English District stance on women ordination and abortion both militate against the 125-year-old position of the LCMS.

Conferences, meetings and symposiums often are completely slanted toward the neoliberal point of view. A recent press release from the English District stated:

The English District of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod will present a Centennial Symposium of the theme: 'Communicating the Faith of the Fathers in the Language of the Children' at Concordia Theological Seminary, St. Louis, May 3, 4, 5, 1973.

The theme speaker, Dr. Walter Bouman, of the Evangelical Lutheran Seminary, Columbus, Ohio, will point to the same concerns which brought the English language into the Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod a hundred years ago, but today the task of transmitting the faith is far more complex.

Members of the English District taking part in the Symposium were Dr. Herbert Lindemann, Dr. Eugene Nissen, Rev. Alan Haare, Dr. Harry Huxhold, Dr. Richard Jungkuntz, Dr. Bertwin Frey, Rev. William Reinking, Dr. A. C. Piepkorn, Professor David Deppe, Dr. John Tietjen, District President John Baumgaertner, Rev. George Bornemann, Dr. John Damm, Mr. Victor Mennicke, Mr. Amandus Derr, Rev. Alvin Mack and Pastor Warren Gritzke.

The Concordia Seminary faculty members present and available for informal discussion about issues which confront the church were Dr. A. V. Rohr Sauer, Dr. Edgar Krentz, Dr. Robert Smith,

Professor Holland Jones, Dr. Everett Kalin, Dr. Ralph Klein, Dr. Norman Habel, and Dr. Carl Graesser. One immediately notices not only the fact that these men represent the neoliberal point of view in contrast to the 125 year old doctrinal stance of the LCMS, but that not one conservative faculty member has been given the opportunity to present the conservative side of the issues.

Synod Within Synod

Prior to transferring from the English District one conservative pastor detailed the reason for such a move to his church council.

As I look at the English District today and talk with other pastors, I can't help but come to the conclusion that the English District has changed much in recent years and, in my opinion, not for the good. So much so that I would question whether there is any longer any validity for its existence as a separate non-geographical district. It would not be an overstatement in my mind to say that I find in the English District a spirit different from that which I find in the geographical districts. It is plain to me that by and large the traditional doctrine and practice of the Missouri Synod is not honored as it should be within the confines of the English District... Certainly, every district has a few pastors who depart from our teaching.

The difference is that within the English District, there is no longer any discipline. I would venture to say that today it would almost be impossible for a pastor to be expelled for teaching false doctrine. Quite the contrary is true; pastors who find themselves in difficulty for doctrinal reasons in other geographical districts seem to migrate to the English District. That, too, is plain to see, especially in the status call system recently inaugurated by the English District. Two recent Northwest Pastoral Conferences... were almost devoid of scriptural study. Modern practices in group-therapy and psychology almost completely occupied our times at one, and we had more of psychology at our Fall conference this year. The theological study was conducted by Professor Norman Habel of our St. Louis Seminary, who, to my knowledge, is one of the most liberal professors at this seminary.

Both our Eastern and our Northern Pastoral Conference, in essence, condemned President J. A. O. Preus for the manner in which he conducted an investigation of professors and their teachings at our St. Louis

Seminary. Others have definitely stated that he should never have started an investigation; that professors should be allowed latitude in what they teach our future pastors.

I know of at least one instance (Redeemer-Hinsdale, Illinois) where an English District congregation has elected a woman as Elder (in spite of a statement by our Commission of Theology that this is unscriptural). [It is no over-statement to say that the English District is the foremost neoliberal synod within a synod, but some districts are not far behind.]

V DISTRICT PRESIDENTS

What would be a better prize for the neoliberal machine to control after a seminary, college, board and district than the Council of District Presidents? Not so many years ago, in November-December of 1964, the college of Presidents agreed that "Genesis 3, like all Scripture, is inspired by God, and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness: also that this chapter speaks of an actual happening involving real people."

But today there are members of the Council of Presidents who are politically motivated neoliberals espousing the historical-critical method of interpretation. The council boldly and inconsistently accused Christian News of unethical practices. At the same time the council kept silent about the defamation in editor Koenig's writings. This kind of odd inconsistency occurred again recently when the district presidents voted 22 to 12 on a resolution asking that the Crossroads letter not be distributed throughout synod (the letter asked that the Statement be agreed upon as correct Lutheran doctrine). It is significant that no such action emanated from the council when Dr. Frey's Declaration of Determination was making the rounds kicking up its share of dissent.

Responsible For Polarization

Most conservatives agree with conservative Michigan District President, Richard L. Schlecht, who wrote to pastors in the March 1973 district newsletter: "In no way do we wish to be judgmental or unbrotherly. Yet, we cannot help but feel that the Council could do much to heal the synod. It bears, perhaps, the greatest responsibility for polarization within the synod. Its inconsistent action and decision can produce nothing else. We do, however, pledge ourselves to work together for more understanding and unity. God help the synod if its leaders labor at cross purposes."

A similar train of thought is expressed by South Wisconsin District President Karl L. Barth in an open letter:

The whole question of supporting the theological position of the President, which is the historic position of our Synod (one 'moderate' publication calls it the 'Pieper-Preus' position), also needs airing in this connection. Not once in recent years has the Council expressed to the church confidence in the President. Council members have pleaded with him in our sessions to give them a vote of confidence when their allegiance to Scriptures and the Confessions has been called into question. The Council, however, has not shown him similar courtesy. And in the November 1972 meeting the Council was unwilling, though a resolution to that effect was offered, to do what the CTCR had previously done, namely, acknowledge that the President's Statement contains nothing contrary to the Scriptures and the Confessions--this, although the accusation by the St. Louis faculty that his theology is 'sub-biblical' and un-Lutheran' still stands.

Now, when some of my brothers in the Council, in anguish because of these accusations and frustrated by the Council's apparent unwillingness to declare the President orthodox, have used Crossroads as a vehicle for expressing themselves to the church, they are pointed to the 'Statement on Ethics.'

As for that part of the resolution which asks the CTCR not to make a public evaluation of what the faculty chose to circularize throughout Synod, I suggested in our meeting that such a resolution would 'make interesting reading in the church.' Indeed it has! Since the news release has appeared, laymen and pastors alike have asked me, 'Is the Council really that much afraid of these faculty statements? Are the statements really that bad that they do not want them scrutinized by that commission specified by the By-Laws of Synod to engage itself in that very kind of study?'

This whole business leaves me more sad than angry. For it seems to me that the Council has become one of the most divisive groups within Synod. It has projected itself into the business of the Fact Finding Committee, the business of the Board of Control and now, with its most recent resolutions, is in danger of becoming what some of its members have accused the CTCR of being, a curia that arbitrates every squabble in the church and pronounces judgment by majority

vote.

Richard Klann

The thoughts of this section are well summarized by an article in the April 1973 Affirm written by Dr. Richard Klann, faculty minority professor at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis: "Now, without call or warrant from synod, they [Council of District Presidents] have presumed by resolution to tell a Commission of Synod how to conduct its doctrinal evaluation. The CTCR must not make public its evaluation of the joint and contrived personal confessions of the faculty majority of the St. Louis Seminary--so these 22 District Presidents have voted."

How political these District Presidents are! Last September they piously asked the St. Louis seminary faculty to make their confessions, so that everyone in synod might learn where they stand. The faculty leadership used this opportunity to join itself to the majority of the District Presidents for the purpose of giving the entire synod its versions of the pernicious teaching at the St. Louis Seminary. Now the faculty majority and the 22 District Presidents fear that the CTCR would expose the St. Louis faculty statements for what they really are. Many who have studied those faculty publications [Faithful to Our Calling, Faithful to Our Lord, Part I & II] can see the evasions, the false doctrine, and hypocrisy revealed in those publications.

The 22 District Presidents are reported to have accepted the argument that synod has not yet decided whether or not to endorse a literal interpretation of the Bible, whether or not to reject the Historical-Critical Method, whether or not to hold faculty members of the St. Louis Seminary to teach only and faithfully the doctrines upon which synod was founded.

It is now evident that 22 District Presidents have exposed themselves to the church as devoid of that moral leadership some of them have claimed for themselves. They have broadcast their claim for collegiality most diligently through the media. But synod rejected their pretensions at Milwaukee. Undoubtedly, synod will know how to tame these rebellious District Presidents at New Orleans as well as in 1974, when their terms of office will expire. We shall await that verdict on this attempted power grab of the majority of the District Presidents.

VI BOARD FOR MISSIONS

Martin Kretzmann

Besides seminary, college, district and Council of Presidents, neoliberals attempted to get control of boards within the synod. The Board of Missions is one example. One person of the staff of the Board for Missions who exemplifies the neoliberal doctrinal and political stance is Dr. Martin Kretzmann. German theologian William M. Oesch charges Dr. Kretzmann's doctrine as "last stage heresy" which abdicates "the missions in heathen lands...to Satan." This is strong language.

A conservative Australian theologian described his impressions of the union which Kretzmann helped arrange with the Church of South India: "Martin Kretzmann, whom no one would regard as a Lutheran, has negotiated intercommunion with the Church of South India, the worst of all union churches in India....It was truly a great tragedy that your church allowed Kretzmann to remain the powerful figure of your mission." That was written on June 12, 1970.

One of Dr. Kretzmann's major achievements was the authoring of the synod's Mission Affirmations. The Mission Affirmations are perhaps acceptable...with a correct or conservative interpretation. But it seems that most neoliberals prefer to interpret the Affirmations in a manner which contradicts traditional 125-year-old LCMS theology. They are attempting to do the same kind of neoliberal interpretation with the Social Ministry Affirmations. But with these Affirmations, their success may be short-lived with one of the main contributors to the Affirmations--Dr. Martin Scharlemann--repudiating the neoliberal social activist interpretation placed upon them.

At any rate, the Mission Affirmations interpreted in a neoliberal manner, place much more emphasis on the bodily and material needs of man than Scripture itself does. Neoliberals interpret the Mission Affirmations as saying that unless one takes care of the material wants and needs of the human being, salvation is not complete. Such a notion flies in the face of justification by faith. Dr. Kretzmann certainly has been influential in placing a distinctly neoliberal interpretation on the synodical Mission Affirmations, which he had a part in writing. Again in his "What on Earth Does The Gospel Do?" Dr. Kretzmann places the "Gospel" and "pure doctrine" in total opposition to each other, contrary to the Lutheran Confessions.

Although the Board for Missions is divided between conservative and neoliberal forces, in late

1972, the Board refused to renew Dr. Kretzmann's contract. Dr. Kretzmann accused conservative chairman of the board, Pastor Waldo Werning, of taking excerpts from various articles written by Dr. Kretzmann and using them out of context. Obviously, though, what with the tremendous gulf between the theologies of neoliberal Dr. Kretzmann and conservative board members, it would hardly have been necessary to take Dr. Kretzmann's comments "out of context."

Neoliberal manager Dr. Wolbrecht directed the reorganization of all of the Mission Boards of the synod into one unified Board during 1965 and 1966 and while he failed to capture the Board and its staff at that time, he did manage to get his neoliberal friend Dr. William H. Kohn (then President of the Southeast District) placed into the position of Executive Secretary (1967). Dr. Kohn was known as a neoliberal, a proponent for membership in the Lutheran World Federation, a district leader who influenced for a more open practice in synod's large policy, and one who follows the neoliberal ecumenical practices. The neoliberals were running Dr. Kohn for President of the synod in 1965 against Oliver Harms, who was too conservative for the neoliberals at that time. By 1971, Dr. Kohn, who originally won the post only after several laymen of the Board had gone home when a tie vote was to be broken, had influenced both staff and board members with the result that his personal neoliberal influence now prevailed. Thus Dr. Kohn was able to influence the synod's missions with the neoliberal theology of Call To Openness and Trust and the Declaration of Determination.

Minority Report

This resulted in a Minority Report by five members, who said: Sometimes it has been difficult to deliberate properly and effectively when improper diversity has been contested but not successfully halted within the board. The Mission staff showed a one-sided interest on the side of the faculty majority against the synod's President when it invited the seminary president and a student body representative to speak to the staff about the seminary's relation with the Synodical president without the knowledge of the Synodical president at a mission staff meeting at the seminary on November 16-17, 1970."

The minority pointed out the theological errors in three essays by Rev. Dr. Martin L. Kretzmann, whom the Board refused to reappoint for another year's service last September. It directed attention to theological errors in the statement of the LCA/LCMS Joint Advisory for Middle East ministry and the unionistic practices in the field and in

the Inter-Lutheran Missionary Pre-Field Training Program. The report showed how the Wisconsin Synod is growing fast in Mexico at the expense of the Missouri Synod because not only former ALC pastors in Mexico but also pastors of our LCMS mission in Central America have resigned in protest over the conditions of the Augsburg Center in Mexico City.

When one of the LCMS missionaries preached in a Roman Catholic Mass in Mexico City, and this professor "continued to contend that this action is proper and he would do so in the future, regardless of Missouri Synod's rules and regulations to the contrary," Executive Secretary Kohn was requested to correct and censure the missionary. But he indicated only that he cautioned the professor to give more careful consideration to any invitations to preach for other church bodies and added: "There may be circumstances which might make the acceptance of such an invitation understandable to persons who are not seeking to make judgments."

The minority of five provided additional evidence of theological and ecumenical inadequacies in the fellowship arrangements in Japan, neoliberal campus ministries throughout the synod, Indian ministries through LCUSA, and others. In view of all of this the minority wrote: "We believe that some of the approaches today are in contradiction to our commitment to the Scriptures, Lutheran Confessions, and the Synodical Handbook. We believe that synodical resolutions have spoken clearly in some matters which appear to be ignored. We have tried to the best of our ability to engage in open deliberation and careful study of these matters and find ourselves stymied to the extent that we believe that the only proper recourse is to bring these matters to the attention of the synod in its convention."

Neoliberal Dr. Kohn and his Executive Committee attempted to answer some of the criticisms, and these were met with refutations by the Rev. Herman Mayer of Topeka, Kansas, a former conservative missionary to the Philippines and now a member of the Board for Missions. He showed how the arguments of the neoliberals were superfluous and evaded the issues.

Supplement

A Supplement to the Minority Report was issued by two members, saying: "Because of dire limitations of time, . . . this did not allow time for others of the minority even to consider underwriting this Supplement. This explanation should be made because there has been an effort to discredit the determination of some of these members of the min-

ority. . . ." The Supplement raised 20 questions, most of which still face the synod and ought to be answered at the New Orleans convention by the synod:

1. Shall the synod request its Board for Missions to decide by accepted criteria and objectives when a foreign mission field is ready to answer a sister church relationship with the LCMS or shall all missions be declared sister churches? What freedom is really involved and inherent in sister church relationship for a mission which is greatly dependent upon the mother church in the basics of finances and man power? Can the Mission Affirmations be used to give an excuse for any mission to be in sister church relationship and then to make any decisions in regard to ecumenical relationship even though this may obviously be in contradiction to the LCMS position in doctrine and practice and to the Scriptures and Lutheran Confessions? Must these conditions and criteria be reduced to writing so that both parties recognize their responsibilities over against each other?

2. Since Synod's By Laws required that the Board for Missions recall missionaries and since the divinity of the call is involved, what principles and criteria must be adopted so that the interest of the LCMS and its missionaries and the foreign mission field are not harmed, but rather a productive partnership is at work when cutting personnel from any field?

5. Is the ALC-LCA-LCMS World Mission Study Group and the joint meetings of the three Boards for Missions involving the LCMS in a growing plan which by virtue of the LCMS Constitution and its position in doctrine and practice will not allow some of the propositions which are before them in ecumenical procedures? Is this study by its very nature self-contradictory on the basis of Synod's doctrinal commitments?

6. How can the LCMS in the name of a vague freedom allow any of its missions-- whether they are called daughter churches or foreign mission fields--allow them to join the LWF with all of the compromises that are involved in such membership and influences which run contrary to the influence which the LCMS is trying to exert by its very right and responsibility? How can the LCMS deny itself membership in an organization which it allows membership by its missions which it supports with its own money and prayers?

10. Will the LCMS continue to ignore the pleas of its sister churches in Europe, such as France, Germany, and the Finnish Church which has separated from the LCMS in protest? Will the LCMS offend these Free Churches of Europe by showing more concern for its activity with the LWF rather than encouraging the evangelical Free Churches?...

14. Will the LCMS allow its campus ministries office to be placed into LCUSA with greater influence and direction from LCUSA while the claim is made that this will be an excellent working arrangement because administrative responsibility for campus ministries continues to remain on the individual district and local level? Will the LCMS continue to allow a growing number of Inter-Lutheran campus ministry work and joint and unified work on certain campuses in some Districts contrary to the Constitution of the LCMS?....

18. Will the LCMS continue to be a truly Scriptural and evangelical force in world missions today, proclaiming clearly our distinctive Biblical voice with corresponding influence, and thus counteract the unscriptural influences of the 'New Theology,' syncretism and universalism that is rampant today? Will the LCMS voice be distinctive from the LWF and WCC influences?

19. Will women clergy be allowed in daughter churches overseas or in those churches with which our daughter churches are closely related and doing joint work?

20. Will the LCMS be partner in the 'Internationalization Of Mission,' a totally ecumenical and pan-Lutheran concept and approach which does not in any way recognize the differences between the doctrinal position and practice of various Lutheran churches?

This Supplement offered a unique account of the Board meeting at Moorhead, Minnesota, May 9-12, 1971, which provided an insight into the manner in which the Kohn-controlled staff and Board conducted its business. Otherwise, the Supplement indicates more problems in unionism in India, Mexico, Lutheran World Federation and LCUSA, campus ministries, and other areas.

Another dominant figure for the neoliberal cause in the Board for Missions has been Professor Paul Harms of the Senior College in Fort Wayne. He and his neoliberal friends with Dr. Kohn find themselves in a minority at this convention, as the reader can discover in the 1973 workbook for the New

Orleans convention. The conservatives will appreciate the excellent Policy Statement which the Board adopted, approved by the minority led by neoliberal Paul Harms (one of the editors of the neoliberal Concord publication) who will face re-election at the New Orleans convention. Professor Harms and Rev. Paul Martens distinguished themselves as neoliberals by insisting that their names be appended to the resolution as having recorded their negative votes wherever the resolution is published.

Unionism

The Mission Board report, of which the neoliberal minority complain, also contains some well chosen criticism of the tri-Lutheran campus ministry agencies, which many are convinced are unionistic and not in tune with the synod's Handbook. There is also the unionism of the campus pastors at their annual Lutheran campus pastor conferences where Missouri Synod campus pastors attend the LCA communion services, and LCA clergymen attend LCMS services.

How tragic that the neoliberal Dr. Kohn, re-dismissed Dr. M. L. Kretzmann with Dr. Paul Harms, and others have allowed the missions of the Missouri Synod to deteriorate to the extent that they have. There is little time to correct and redirect the missions into traditional Lutheran paths. This will be done only if the influence of Dr. Kohn, whose staff representative at the liberal September 1972 meeting in Des Plaines, Illinois, was neoliberal Walter H. Meyer, is halted.

We conclude with a single paragraph from the Minority Report for the Board for Missions:

The doctrinal division was already apparent five years ago when the major mission boards of the synod were united into one board. At that time the Board for European Affairs, on which two of us were members, resolved to ask the entire new Board for Missions to entertain a motion of faithfulness to the synod's doctrinal position as a basis for mission vigor and out-reach. The Board of Missions leaders at that time requested that this resolution not be presented because of existing divisions and a desire for unifying the Board. Consequently, the Board has not been unified, but the divisions have become more obvious while theological and ecumenical differences have not been effectively faced.

VIII YOUTH AND STUDENTS

As with Martin Luther himself, neoliberals have

realized that without the youth of the church interested in a cause, one may as well give up. Also, if the youth are against your goals, your project will be hampered. The neoliberal reaction to these simple truths is both frightening and astonishing.

In a November 24, 1970, memo to district contact men, Pastor Lueking wrote that "great strength lies in the graduates of the seminaries of the past decade--the same can be said of our Teachers Colleges. Put that kind of thing in motion wherever you can." This neoliberal plan of action was not new. They had already made great inroads into the area of youth materials. On April 8, 1971, a pastor in Kansas complained of the materials in the "Mission:Life Sunday School courses, in youth worship materials..." One need only read the Workbook of the Milwaukee Convention to realize the depth of anger directed toward the lesson materials in Mission:Life and what the Walther League was doing.

Walther League

The Rejoicing in Mercy bulletin insert for the 125th anniversary of synod clearly explained what happened to the Walther League:

The Walther League was caught up in the restlessness and revolutionary spirit that prevailed America's youth in the 1960's. In 1968, the Walther League constitution was changed radically. It had become a high-school age organization, oriented toward issues of hunger, poverty, racism, and international developments.

[The results of this neoliberal takeover of the Walther League are stated by the insert:]

The close liaison between the League and the synod was replaced by a more comprehensive program of the Synod's Board for Youth Ministry.

Because of the redirection in Walther League goals, congregations went so far as to change the name of their youth groups from "Walther League" to "Lutheran Youth," or "Young People's Group," etc. The drastic change to an almost total preoccupation with the problems of the world was even admitted by Walther League personnel. On May 19, 1970, Martin Conrad wrote to Walther League newsletter subscribers that "the need for a youth-led, issue-oriented ministry within the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod is greater now than ever. And our brothers and sisters in this country and the world are still victims of hunger, oppression, and injustice."

It soon became obvious that congregations were not objecting to the goals of the Walther League to

help prisons in need. The problem arose when the Walther League started dictating to the youth what the "Christian" stand must be on Vietnam, amnesty, hunger, etc. Moreover, neoliberal speakers, such as Professor George Hoyer, were continually speaking to Walther League groups and as Pastor Elmer Witt suggested, getting rid of the Sunday School faith which pastors, teachers, and parents had inculcated.

This is not to say, that synod's Board of Youth Ministry is conservative—controlled. Even here the theology and ideas of neoliberals have gained ascendance. One only needs to hear of the grand scheme for a Lutheran held convention in Houston this coming summer which will include youth from all three Lutheran denominations: Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, American Lutheran Church, Lutheran Church of America. The announcement that there will be worship services confirms to what extent the new Board is also disregarding synodical guidelines on fellowship principles.

Seminar

When the St. Louis Seminary student publication Seminar desired to solicit subscriptions from pastors of the Missouri Synod, it was required to undergo doctrinal review as outlined in the Handbook (11, 153). The first issue of the Seminar reviewed was found to have "implied distortions of the doctrine of man," and "non-Christian aspects in the revealed disposition of the Writers' [of the Scriptures]."

In deciding to discontinue subscriptions for pastors in order to get around the doctrinal review, editor seminarian John L. Freese stated: "It became clear that the process of doctrinal review would continue to be a problem with all future issues of Seminar. If we were to defy the doctrinal review and publish anyway, we risked complete loss of the student theological journal; if we proceeded under doctrinal review and continued to try to negotiate, it was evident that we would not have any articles with substance left in them. At either turn we risked loss of our right to publish a meaningful student journal." Notice the lack of concern in trying to correct the doctrinally-deficient Seminar, as well as the implication that not even one article could be written from a conservative point of view.

Some students were not only theological neoliberals; they also worked politically for that cause. Prior to President Preus' election at Denver, neoliberal students were speaking of political action at the site of the convention. On February 15, 1969, Glen Thaemert, a vicar at the time, wrote to his classmates:

I would like to see 100 or more of us vicars

tell Missouri Synod at convention (or after it) that we are going to transfer our membership to ALC if the convention says no to ALC fellowship. About 100 vicars picketing the Denver Convention with signs about the (ALC) present fellowship (as practiced in most places) the consequential irrelevancy (in part) of the ALC question, the need for LCA fellowship....

This writers' class at the seminary became politically active prior to the 1971 Milwaukee Convention. Class president Richard M. Koehnke, son of the former president of Concordia Teachers College, River Forest, wrote to district presidents, asking for "one-to-one conversation between seminarians and voting delegates to the convention.... When we receive the names and addresses, we will go about the task of 'matching up' vicars and home-ward-bound students, with the delegates nearest them geographically." The failure of this neoliberal student-led political action can be seen in the rousing support which the Milwaukee convention gave President Preus for initiating the seminary inquiry.

Students stirred up as much commotion as possible especially in the Dr. Ehlen controversy. Two vicars, John Lottes and Bob Preece, wrote letters to fellow vicars, encouraging expressions of support for Dr. Ehlen. Seminarian Dave Roschke, son of a neoliberal Board of Control member, wrote up a sheet on Dr. Ehlen which inferred that even Professor Martin Scharlemann used the same method of interpreting Scriptures as did Dr. Ehlen. Seminarians Roschke and Rick Jaech, son of the president of the Northwest District, organized a small group of students with the intent of personally contacting every first and second year student on campus and encouraging him to write "at least four letters to influence the Board of Control (Spectrum, 1-12-71)."

Such action in support of Dr. Ehlen by the students caused one recent graduate to state: "I think they are ignorant, both of the true nature of Biblical criticism and of the true nature of authority and discipline in the church, not to speak of a misunderstanding of Dr. Preus' intentions and concerns." During the Ehlen affair, the constant character defamation of President Preus in classroom, chapel and Spectrum would cause any naive student to think of Dr. Preus as an evil person. That most students are still not aware of the theological dimensions of the problems is obvious from the fact that very few of them can write a one-paragraph summary of why Professor Scharlemann sides with the faculty minority. Believing that he uses the historical-critical method in his classes, which he insists he does not, plainly shows the ignorance of the majority of students as to what the method really entails.

Sputum

The support of the neoliberal cause by the majority of students evidenced itself in other ways. The April 1, 1973 (April Fool's) issue of the Spectrum entitled Sputum, was especially caustic in its attacks on the conservative point of view:

The B*H*E [Board for Heresy Exposure] recently announced the implementation of a new retirement policy for the Exegetical Department at Concordia Seminary--St. Louis.... The program shall be known as R*A*P*E (Retire Aged Personnel Early).... Ray Horrell has established telephone fellowship with Professor Robert Preus.... Many reacted with scorn when the president of synod appointed his now sainted Tact-Foisting Committee to investigate numerous charges about life at the seminary.... The entire school has been regrettably undermined because of the multitude of nefarious liberal tendencies which our synod has for too long tolerated in silence. We must speak out and we must condemn. There will be no peace at our St. Louis Seminary until every last squirrel has been exterminated. Bullwinkle J. Moose.

There have been other April Fool's issues of the Spectrum, but none of them have been so one-sided against the conservatives as this one was. On April 23, 1973, Mr. Walter H. Werning of LaGrange, Illinois wrote the following to President Tietjen:

I can enjoy a good joke and clean humor as my family and friends know well, but the mockery, the blasphemy, the foul innuendos are just too much for any Christian's convictions and ethics. And to think that such putrid stuff comes from the minds of theological students and perhaps(?) future ministers of the Gospel is just more than I can take.... I sincerely hope you [President Tietjen] will take disciplinary action against those responsible for this 'blast' in 'Sputum' and inform the church of your action and the results, since this is a disgrace and an insult to the entire Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

One incident in particular depicted the use to which the faculty majority was making of students. Students in the 1972 graduating class wanted to thank the faculty for the educational experience during the past years. But knowledgeable conservative students realized how such a letter could be used by the seminary administration. The class heard assurances from student leaders that the letter would not be used publicly. Yet not only did the St. Louis Lutheran on June 10, 1972, reveal that "earlier in the week Concordia's fourth year class had sent a letter expressing gratitude to the faculty for

the 'ministry and community which you have shared with us,' but President Tietjen even spoke of the letter at the graduation ceremonies. Such a flagrant deception and misuse of the letter caused one student to write Dr. Tietjen, accusing him of sinning.

With such an atmosphere on the campus, caused by the neoliberal attempt to take over the seminary classrooms with a demand that the historical-critical method be taught, it is no surprise to find students complaining about "the loneliness, confusion and alienation at this place (Spectrum 1-19-72). " On December 11, 1972 one student complained that even in the classroom "too many of the participants cop-out on their responsibility and others in the class don't seem to care... Why the cessation of the high-quality lectures and prof-led discussions this year? "

One reason could be that instead of preparing for classes, neoliberal professors were traveling all over the country at the request of Pastor Lueking and his group. This was particularly true of Professor Edgar Krentz, who is the recognized neoliberal representative of the historical-critical method and a real power behind President John Tietjen. In fact, one neoliberal professor remarked that the real president of the seminary is not Dr. Tietjen, but Dr. Krentz.

As more and more neoliberal students were certified for ordination, one is not surprised to learn that even during the Harms' administration seven district presidents publicly complained not only that "more and more St. Louis grads are giving real doctrinal problems," but "that pastors are recommending that students not go to the St. Louis Seminary." When neoliberal seminarians became parish pastors, reactions from laymen were various. One layman wrote his young neoliberal pastor in 1971: "Because I know your teachings first hand and not from hearsay, I feel compelled to do the following: 1. Withhold my offering... until God's Word is again taught. 2. Refrain from participation in all evangelistic activities... until the Holy Spirit moves you to teach prospective members God's Word...."

At least two neoliberals whose beliefs were questioned while they were seminarians, were certified by the faculty anyway, and became Unitarian ministers. In January 1966, at a Leaders School convention in the Nebraska District, the following comments were made: "Don't synodical leaders realize that every year we're getting scores of graduates who are not really committed to our synodical position?" Even ten years ago district presidents were complaining about vicars in their congregations.

This writer knows personally of a number of neoliberal, and I might add, conservative vicars from the class of '71, who managed to complete the vicarage year without letting their pastor discover where they stood theologically. The reason for such silence was said to be fear of retaliation.

Certification Questioned

In my own case, my certification for ordination was being questioned even ten minutes prior to the faculty meeting at which the vote to certify seminarians for ordination was to be taken. Because of my conservatism, one professor stated that he would seriously question my qualifications for ordination. Another professor told me that he was going to register a negative vote against my being certified. Realizing that a single negative vote can delay a student's ordination, one can sympathize with the conservatives who are reticent about making their views known. What the neoliberals can do to a conservative professor is to stomp-out of a chapel service; but conservative students can be kept from becoming ministers.

More than a few students have told me that they will become active in a conservative manner once they are ordained. Unfortunately, this is true only of a few of them. For the pressures from neoliberals who are district presidents or in charge of missions can also be intense. The naked fact that needs to be known is that already there has been talk among neoliberal professors that conservative students who strongly oppose the historical critical method of interpretation should not be ordained. And it is a known fact that conservative students are punished for their views, particularly in the exegetical department of the graduate school.

Some conservatives speak out even with this threat hanging over their heads. After James Voelz testified at the Milwaukee convention open hearing on the problems of "allowability" at the seminary, President Tietjen met Voelz in the hallway and wished him good luck in his studies. He also mentioned that he would be seeing seminarian Voelz again when he came up for certification.

At times, conservative seminarians are subtle in their criticism of the faculty majority opposition to President Preus and the inquiry. On February 4, 1972, Tim Mowry offered the following parable in the student Spectrum as a contribution to the ongoing theological reflection by the campus community:

A certain man took a journey through his own land. And it came to pass that as he walked along, he saw and heard those who sought to undermine the land and hand it over to the foe.

On every hand he heard men repeat half-truths and un-truths. And the man became very alarmed and he spoke up for the truth in every manner to anyone who would listen. But when the leaders of the land heard the truth which this man spoke, they fell upon him and arrested him and took him to the gallows to hang. And as the rope was being

placed around his neck the man cried out. 'Why am I being punished? I only spoke the truth!' Hearing these words the executioner bent over and whispered to him, 'Yes we know that, but you didn't follow proper procedure.' And there was darkness.... He who has ears to hear, let him hear!

CHAPTER 10

THE PRESS

The Religion News Writer Association rated the controversy between LCMS conservatives and neo-liberals at the St. Louis Seminary the top religious news story of 1972. This is not really a surprise when one realizes the extent to which both the church publications and the secular press were used, manipulated, and controlled by neoliberals, hoping to cast a badlight on the actions of the conservative administration. For the last decade conservatives have been protesting over the control which neoliberals exert on the media. The following sections will briefly summarize attempts at using the media of the church and country in order to sustain the attack against conservative theology, teaching, and leadership.

I BOARD FOR PARISH EDUCATION

The publication of Mission:Life by BPE gave a good indication of the depth of neoliberal influence at the Concordia Publishing House. The Milwaukee convention workbook contained quite a number of protests against Mission:Life materials. In Journey to Freedom, for example, Jonah is presented as a myth, a comical character, who only presents a religious message. When Mission:Life director Dr. Allan Hart Jahsmann made the comment that he knew of no false doctrine contained in Mission:Life a delegate at the Milwaukee convention stood up and accused the convention of sitting back while heresy was spread throughout the synod.

Most conservatives do accept the multi-media aspect of the new Sunday School literature. The complaints center not on the change in structure but rather on the change in doctrine. Parts of Mission:Life are written by neoliberals while other parts are written by conservatives. Naturally, the conservatives will disagree with those parts of Mission:Life which were written by neoliberals. In the Milwaukee convention workbook of 1971, thirteen

memorials give detailed evidence of the false teaching contained in Mission:Life materials (Workbook, pp. 117-125).

The complaints concerning Mission:Life even come from a leader of The Evangelical Lutheran Free Church of Germany. On August 8, 1971, he wrote: "When just now.... I examined the Mission:Life education project in which you have invested millions of dollars, I experienced horror, even surpassing that of the past. Are you really going on to spread far and wide this shrewdly devised and totally undermining material in order to destroy both your own souls and those of your children? "

Conservatives in the States echoed similar thoughts. Delegate Arthur Grunewald of the Milwaukee Convention asked: "Do you remember way back when you received material from Concordia Publishing House that you never had to question whether it was doctrinally sound? Wouldn't it be great if we could still have that same Christian confidence? Wasn't it \$4,500,000.00 they spent on Mission:Life material even though the material had never been approved by the LCMS to be in full accordance with the Word of God and hasn't been approved to this day? "

There are neoliberals like Pastor Robert Hoyer on the BPE staff who say that they are not disturbed greatly "when a friend and fellow Christian disagrees with me in his interpretation of some passage, or in his acceptance of some geographical or historical statement in the Bible." For the most part, though, the administration of CPH has been conservative. The problem is that there are too many pots cooking at the House for careful scrutiny of prepared materials. Of course, no publishing house can be totally neoliberal which offers an annual sale where conservatives can buy books written by Francis Pieper, P. E. Kretzmann, and Martin Luther at very low prices. And no publishing house can be totally neoliberal which refuses to publish

the neoliberal commentary manuscripts emanating from the St. Louis Seminary.

II CONCORDIA THEOLOGICAL MONTHLY

Many pastors have refused to subscribe to the Concordia Theological Monthly (CTM) because of its acceptance of the historical-critical method. The irony of the situation is that prior to 1954 almost every article totally opposed the use of the historical-critical method. But since the editorship of Professor Herbert Mayer and other neoliberals, the publication has completely reversed its position on inerrancy, inspiration, and the historical-critical method of interpretation. In fact, these changes were so drastic and obvious, that the Report on the inquiry mentioned the CTM as a source for making it clear that there is doctrinal diversity at the seminary. The CTM prior to 1954 stands in marked contrast to the statements of neoliberals that the doctrinal stance of synod has not been changed. (Professor Herbert Mayer's CTM editorial of January, 1973)

Censorship

Since the arrival of Professor Mayer as chief editor, conservatives have found it increasingly difficult to present their point of view in the CTM. For example, conservative Dr. John Warwick Montgomery complained that the CTM refused to give him the right of replying to criticisms against his own paper. Probably one of the most obvious occasions of censorship occurred in the June 1966 CTM. Conservative missionary Don Niewsender had written an article on Buddhism. CTM decided to print it. Although missionary Niewsender had agreed only to minor grammatical changes, editor Herbert Mayer ignored that agreement. Pastor Niewsender wrote to a member of the Board of Control of St. Louis Seminary: "An article of mine that appeared in the June 1966 CTM had its conclusion utterly rewritten although I had the editor's word that he had made 'practically no changes' in the manuscript. Approximately one typewritten page of what appeared was simply not my work."

It seems, though, that editor Mayer and the staff of the CTM do not enjoy the shoe on the other foot. When the CTM staff learned that according to the Handbook of the synod they would have to have their publication doctrinally reviewed, they refused even though it meant the loss of synodical subsidy. Now instead of every month, the CTM appears about 6 or 8 times a year.

Although the September 1969 issue of the CTM stated that the "journal has not and will not engage

in politics or the persecution of personalities," one only has to skim editorials of recent months to find a constant barrage against the "ethical" procedures of President Preus, who was attempting to return the Missouri Synod to its Scriptural doctrinal stance of the past 125 years. Only one quote from a CTM editorial is sufficient to give evidence of the neoliberal definition of terms. "We subscribe without reservation to the doctrinal content of the confessions of the church, recognizing with past teachers of the church that the method of arriving at doctrine (for example, use of exegesis, mode of arguments, etc.) may in some instances be improved upon." The latter part of the quotation, when understood with the new neoliberal terminological changes, makes little sense of the phrase "without reservation."

Recent issues of the CTM clearly depict the neoliberal slant of its pages. An example is in the January 1973 issue where neoliberal Professor John Reumann presents a case for ordaining women and Dr. Wenzel Lohff's article Justification and Anthropology is used by editor Herbert Mayer to indirectly cast light on the "fact" that the synodical doctrinal position has not changed. Editor Mayer concludes instead, that "what has changed is various theological interpretations of both Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions."

What disturbs conservatives most about the CTM is not only its theology, but also its deceptiveness. Already in May 1965, the conservative movement Faith Forward First Concerns questioned "the factuality of the editorial of the February 1965 CTM about the harmony between the old and new schools of Biblical interpretations. . . . These are two different hymns not in harmony with each other and with completely different treatments of the Word."

Fair Representation

Then there is the December 1972 Herbert Mayer editorial, which stated that "official committees and faculties must be representative and they must be able to function in an atmosphere of mutual trust and respect." One month later an open letter criticized that very statement thus:

The faculty of which you are a member, Concordia Seminary St. Louis, is the great violator of your own principle. 90% of your faculty are opposed to the theology and actions of the president of our synod, Dr. Jacob Preus. . . . In almost a decade, no conservative theologian has been called to the St. Louis Seminary faculty. Is this what you call fair representation? In the last year, you and your editorial board have used the Concordia Theological Monthly for spreading the liberal theology of your seminary around. You have

used its pages to attack Dr. Preus politically and theologically.... When was the last time you accepted a manuscript from a conservative, and when was the last time you asked a conservative to write an essay? You also say, 'Official committees and faculties must be able to function in an atmosphere of mutual trust and respect.' Your own faculty in no way fits this description.

We have heard that you deliberately keep the five known conservatives off committees on your faculty. If Dr. Preus is defeated at the New Orleans Convention by a liberal or a conservative that the liberals can control, conservatives know that they are in for a 'bloodbath.' The liberals have done more to stifle orthodox theology than anyone else and you got away with it for twenty years. All we have to do is look at the writers for your own Concordia Theological Monthly to know how really unfair you are.

Indiana District President E. H. Zimmerman summarized his views on the CTM to the Council of Presidents in November 1972:

The Concordia Theological Monthly, published by the Saint Louis Seminary, is a theological journal, written primarily for the benefit of parish pastors. It is my opinion that the CTM is not nearly as helpful as it used to be. There has been a departure from the position of the Missouri Synod over the past number of years. Many articles favor the "moderate" and liberal [neoliberal] theological position. For example, the November, 1972, issue printed an article entitled 'The Log in Your Own Eye,' by Doctor Paul G. Bretscher, an article, which was rejected by the Commission on Theology and Church Relations of the Synod. The same issue of the CTM printed an article, which upholds a view of fellowship, which is contrary to the position of Synod. No editorial comment was made with regard to either of these articles. Both were left to stand, not only as the position of the authors, but also as the position of the faculty, or at least the Editorial Staff.

In stark contrast to the present neoliberal takeover of the CTM and the use of the CTM to inculcate a new theology into the parish and school, the first volume of Lehre Und Wehre (the forerunner of the CTM) described its task: "[It is] not a friend of the church, but a servant of the church. It is to take a position not above or alongside, but in and under the church. It will not serve as an arena for those also whose aim is to attack the church of the true doctrine and its sacred institutions." The

irony of this statement which certainly does not describe the present CTM, is found in the fact that in January 1966, the staff of the CTM used this statement in a description of its own stance.

III MFUE, FORUM, INFO, CONCORD

MFUE AND FORUM

Since the CTM was mainly sent to pastors and scholars interested in theology, neoliberal leaders recognized the necessity of publications for pastors in the field, contact men, and laity. Missouri: Free, United, Evangelical (MFUE) was one of the first attempts. The editor of the newsletter was Pastor Richard Koenig. In the second newsletter, editor Koenig reveals his sources: "In order to keep abreast of what is happening we need to communicate a good deal by telephone. Dr. Fuerbringer, Dean Lueking, and I confer from time to time on events and items which should be reported to you." In essence, then MFUE and Lutheran Forum are products of Fuerbringer-Lueking-Koenig, and behind these three, Dr. Tietjen.

The first issue of MFUE states that the publication is "being mailed to what is known as the Stamford 'gang' and a large number of people who are new to the mailing list.... The letter is being sent out at the instruction of a committee headed by Dr. Alfred Fuerbringer, former president of Concordia Theological Seminary, St. Louis, Missouri." Besides Dr. Lueking, the other member of the committee was Mr. Richard Meier of Indianapolis.

After reading often of the Fuerbringer-Lueking-Koenig attack against President Preus, it is almost amusing to find a retraction because of an error. But this did appear, correcting the impression given that while Dr. Jungkuntz had been professor at Springfield Seminary, Dr. Preus, then President of the Springfield Seminary, had "dismissed" him. The error is corrected by stating that Dr. Jungkuntz himself "pointed out" that he had not been dismissed, but had accepted calls away from Concordia at the end of his contract period. Fuerbringer - Lueking - Koenig regret "this error since these letters are intended to be as fair and as factual as possible." Yet the unfairness of the newsletter became apparent as more and more space was filled with attacks against LCMS conservatives and especially President Preus. It became obvious that the Fuerbringer-Lueking-Koenig publication would attack President Preus as much as possible: "The LCMS administration under Dr. Jacob Preus has moved steadily toward the establishment of Biblical inerrancy as the basis for doctrinal discipline."

The Forum would continue the perpetuation of the usual neoliberal myths. Also, the total negative attitude of the Forum toward anything President Preus did was consistent. After President Preus remarked that the ordination of women by the American Lutheran Church could be divisive of fellowship, the Fuerbringer - Lueking - Koenig newsletter stated:

The president's remarks were also made despite a 1971 LCMS convention resolution retaining fellowship with ALC after ALC adopted its present policy on the ordination of women. When asked to characterize ALC and LCA reaction to President Preus' abrupt change of direction, one prominent LCMS official exclaimed, 'Disgust.'

Besides the obvious slap-in-the-face by some "prominent" neoliberal LCMS official, the above statement contains such ambiguity that it is difficult not to charge the writer with misrepresentation. First of all, the LCMS convention made it very clear that no further fellowship with the ALC should be initiated until the question of ordaining women was settled. Second the LCMS convention decisively resolved "that the Synod reaffirms its position that the Word of God does not permit women to hold the pastoral office or serve in any capacity involving distinctive functions of this office." Third, President Preus had never changed his "direction" concerning women ordination. He has always considered it to be against the testimony of the Scriptures and divisive of fellowship. To analyze every statement of the Forum in such detail would require a book. The simple fact is that many other statements contain ambiguity, misrepresentation and defamation.

The following is a summary of slanted articles in the Forum prepared by President E. H. Zimmerman for the Council of Presidents in November 1972:

You may remember Neuhaus' vicious attack on the faculty minority (Forum-March 1971]. In spite of the March 1970 statement: 'We have not called for the ousting of officials,' the Forum has maintained a steady attack on the President of Synod....

February 1972: Wayne Saffen pontificates against Preus' 'power and power plays, 'but fails to mention the power plays of Frey, Lueking and the 'moderate' organization, except to say 'we will have to do the political job of getting enough votes to unseat Preus in New Orleans.' Saffen also speaks of 'wishing to have the power of God, which is chiefly mercy.' Where in the long list of tirades is there mercy for the President of Synod?

May 1970: The Forum pictures Doctor Preus as 'the new chief gardener on the LCMS, who has sent his little helpers out with their flit guns to spread pesticide in the general direction of radical, liberal pests'

January 1972: The conservatives are considered guilty of devious methods to get their job done. The Forum blames Doctor Preus for insistence on inerrancy, and, yet, synod's Bylaws state that professors, who are installed, must accept the inerrancy of the Scriptures (4.21)

February 1972: Forum blames Preus for the Handbook requirement that the Commission on Constitutional Matters must interpret Synod's Resolutions. Forum speaks of Doctor Preus as imposing his understanding of Scripture on Synod.

April 1972: Doctor Tietjen and Doctor Ehlen are presented as heroes, in spite of their public defiance of the President of Synod and the Board for Higher Education. The same Forum also announced organized opposition of Doctor Preus, by the Frey-Lueking-Friedrich organization, to remove Doctor Preus at New Orleans, and offered information and encouragement for this movement.

An example of rumor-mongering which the Forum perpetuated is contained in the February 1972 issue. During the Ehlen controversy Dr. Tietjen refused to obey the directives of the President of the synod. Forum said: "The Synod was on a kind of 'red alert' as the rumor circulated that President Preus had decided to supersede the Board and Seminary President John Tietjen and take personal control of the institution.... Although there have been a number of theories put forth, no one seems to know what caused President Preus to abandon plans for a takeover of the Seminary, if that was his intention on January 17." Notice how the statement proceeds from a possible rumor, to definite action, to the question why nothing happened. It would be interesting to learn of President Preus' reaction when he read of his own intentions of which he himself was unaware.

Christian News and Forum

In November 1972, Indiana District President E. H. Zimmerman made some interesting comparisons between the Forum and Christian News:

While Forum generalizes its attack on the conservative movement and position, it spec-

ializes in attacking Doctor Preus. The Christian News, on the other hand, generalizes its attack on liberal theology, and specializes its attack on persons, who are presumed to take a position contrary to the position of Christian News.

The Forum does not regard theological issues as serious in themselves, but looks upon this as 'nit picking,' 'intra-navel gazing,' and as 'debates for clerics with nothing better to do.' The Christian News is vitally interested in theological issues, and relates everything to them.

The Forum appears to be more interested in social action ecumenism, and the promotion of the 'moderate' movement. Christian News seems to be more interested that everyone 'toe the line,' and in exposing what it considers to be violations of the Confessional subscription and of the promotion of orthodoxy.

The Forum tends to ask 'what is good? Let's ignore our differences. We can live with pluralism, but not under conservative leadership.' Christian News seems to say, 'if there is anything bad, let's expose it, and correct it. We cannot live with theological pluralism.

When word got out that Lutheran Brotherhood had given a grant to Forum, protests were made from all over the country. In fact, the criticism toward Lutheran Brotherhood became so severe that the chairman of the Board of Directors expressed his deep regret "that the Brotherhood had inadvertently become involved in what was primarily an internal problem of the Missouri Synod..." The Lutheran Brotherhood had been 'used' by Rev. A. R. Kretzmann, neoliberal friend of Dr. Tietjen, Pastor Dean Lueking, and members of the Board. Pastor Kretzmann was subsequently not reelected to the Board of Lutheran Brotherhood.

That the Forum was so neoliberal in its approach toward conservative theology and administration is clearly understandable when one learns of those who are on the Forum Board of Directors (Robert Madigan and Rudolph Ressmeyer), those who are editorial associates (Richard E. Koenig, F. Dean Lueking, Arthur Carl Piepkorn, John H. Tietjen) and those who are contributing editors (Walter R. Bouman, Herbert Lindemann, Martin E. Marty, and Wayne Saffen). Possibly these men missed Professor Herbert Mayer's CTM editorial in which he asked that all groups within the synod be fairly representative.

Cincinnati layman Chet Swanson produced a Koenig Conversion Table after reading various issues of the Forum. Below are a number of words editor Koenig uses, with the correct meaning, according to Mr. Swanson alongside:

| When Koenig Uses: | H. C. M. (His Correct Meaning) |
|-------------------|---|
| Liberal | Left to left (K rarely uses this term) |
| Moderate | Liberal [Neoliberal] |
| Fundamentalist | Conservative/orthodox |
| Loving | Attitude toward 'moderates' |
| Peace | Don't obstruct 'moderates' |
| Joy | To win even when wrong |
| Evangelical | Ecumenical |
| Doctrine | Belief in 'something' |
| Freedom | License |
| Ten Commandments | Ten suggestions |
| The Miracles | The myths |
| Misuse | Conservatives use of facts to disprove liberal [neoliberal] Myths |

Info

Because of the abrasive manner in which the Forum was written, even some neoliberals were repelled by its message. Possibly in an attempt to present a more tolerant and amiable attitude toward the synodical controversy, two more neoliberal publications appeared. The first issue of Info appeared in September 1972, and the first issue of Concord appeared a few months later.

Info is basically a St. Louis-based publication edited by St. Louis neoliberal pastors and laymen mostly from Bethel Church where more than 15 St. Louis Seminary faculty members belong and who felt that they had something to add to the polarization because of their proximity to the seminary. Concord is based in Indianapolis, Indiana, with Senior College Professor Paul Harms, neoliberal member of the Board for Missions, propounding the typical neoliberal doctrinal slant.

Info seems to give partial answers to questions which the editors pose with obvious bias. We have seen already the bias of its position during the AA-TS affair in 1971. The publication keeps neoliberal pastors up-to-date on certain key documents available. The writers of these included Paul G. Bretscher, Alfred Fuerbringer, Arthur C. Repp and Arlis Ehlen. As President Zimmerman of the Indiana District told the Council of Presidents: "[Info] totally supports the Saint Louis Seminary and its doctrinal position, and is very critical of all efforts to maintain the accepted doctrinal position

of the Synod. "

The neoliberal doctrinal stance of Info is clearly demonstrated in this question-answer example from the April 1973 edition:

Q. Can you give me a little help to understand the discussion of 'Gospel vis-a-vis Scripture?'

A. As you address yourself to a text or portion of Scripture be sure to ask it the 'Lutheran' question set forth brilliantly in Article IV of the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, namely 'What is the 'good news' and/or what is the 'bad news' this text proclaims whatever its form or setting may be?' This question must take precedence over such questions as, 'Is it literally true?' or 'Did it really happen?' For instance, 'The Lord is my Shepherd' clearly involves a symbol, but the phrase is truly full of 'good news.' On the other hand, 'I perish with hunger' is taken from what just about everybody considers a parable (the text doesn't say explicitly whether it really happened or not). But it is real 'bad news' until later in the story comes the 'good news' that 'this son of mine was dead and has come back to life.'

Concord

Concord attempts to bring a theological perspective to the situation. The early issues were much more open than was Forum, especially with a frank admission that the doctrinal positions of the synod "were defined by the St. Louis faculty (which) lost that position of authority because of its stance towards fellowship with the ALC and its "gradual acceptance in the 50's and 60's of the historical-critical method of biblical study."

But such openness by the neoliberal publication could not last long. Its January 1973 issue inferred that Martin Luther, unlike President Preus, would not have opposed the theology of the neoliberals. When it confused the formal (Scripture) and the material (Gospel) principles of Lutheran theology, and also stated that "apart from the Gospel we have no authority," conservatives realized what they were dealing with just one more neoliberal doctrinal propaganda newsletter attempting to stifle conservative theology by means of most strange interpretations not only of Missouri-Synod theology, but even of Lutheran Church history.

IV LUTHERAN WITNESS -- REPORTER

Recalling the August 30-31, 1970, neoliberal

meeting and the objective to "reach... editors of the 'Witness,' 'Witness Reporter,'" one should not be surprised to discover the slant which these two publications often represent. In discussing the letters-to-the-editors during the time of the inquiry, the Reporter decided "to terminate discussion of controversial matters related to the St. Louis Seminary." But before it did that, it would print once more "representative letters...." The ridiculousness of the statement is discovered by simply counting the letters and dividing them into conservative and neoliberal persuasions. Of the 13 letters printed, only 3 were conservative. One of the neoliberal letters was by Pastor Paul G. Bretscher, most assuredly written in compliance with the neoliberal strategy to flood synodical publications with neoliberal points of view.

The bias towards President Tietjen and the faculty majority by the Reporter's editorial staff was clearly shown on September 21, 1969. After quoting statements of neoliberal President Tietjen throughout an entire editorial, the editor stated that "Dr. Tietjen can be believed when he says his administration will be frank and forthright." Subsequent events would cause the reader to disbelieve the truthfulness of that statement.

In one six month period of Witness-Reporter issues, over five articles were devoted entirely to the neoliberal viewpoint with no mention of the synodical stance. Such bias led a pastor to write on October 6, 1969: "...the Northwestern Lutheran [Wisconsin Synod official publication] is now more theologically and doctrinally helpful than our Witness."

A few articles of a neoliberal slant are the following: An article in the May 9, 1965 issue of the Witness-Reporter challenged the historic interpretation of Genesis. In the May 23 issue there is an editorial Are Theological Disagreements Symptoms of Other Synod Ills? which is a promotional effort for permissiveness and allowability in neoliberal teachings. Again, in the November 1965 issue an editorial, Is There Room For Difference Of Opinion Within The Missouri Synod? is a loaded question with permissive neoliberal answers. The May 8, 1966, issue explains away the Southern California Criticism of the Cherry Tree play. The June 5, 1966, editorial "Silver Anniversary Comment.... Bretscher says" by Ros Jensen pretends that the controversies of the past are the same as of today and leaves the impression that neoliberalism is nothing to worry about. And these are just a few random articles clearly showing the bias toward the neoliberal point of view to the exclusion of the conservative voice.

Protests against the publication can be found as

far back as the John Behnken administration even from the pen of President Behnken himself. After hearing reports on one of seminary Professor Habel's lectures given before a pastoral conference, President Behnken wrote that "according to direct reports which I had from the people, the dissatisfaction with the paper was far more pronounced than the Reporter has reported."

Even districts back in 1966 protested against the neoliberal bias of the publication. In April of that year, the Southern California District hosted a meeting where seventy men considered the problems of the publication's editorial policies. Out of seventy men present, only one person defended its stance.

In a letter to pastors and laymen, one delegate to the Milwaukee Convention wrote that he had always "thought the paper was supposed to represent the LCMS, but it appears too much I read about in the Reporter is ALC and LCA. If the 'moderates' [neoliberals] are so impressed with ALC and LCA, why don't they quit our synod and join either one and let us go about our work of spreading the inerrant and inspired Word of God."

Small wonder that throughout the synod in the years, congregation after congregation has been cancelling its blanket subscription to these publications. Now 100,000 fewer copies are sent out than just a few years ago. And the reason given is the neoliberal slant that has controlled and filled the pages of the publication.

Even neoliberal district supplements came under attack. When the Southern District Supplement quoted Time magazine's article criticizing President Preus' actions during the inquiry, one pastor told his congregation: "The front page... should be completely disregarded. It has to be the worst example of objective writing ever witnessed in our 'official' organ... It uses Lutheran Forum as an authority -- a magazine that seeks to discredit President J. A. O. Preus... Please - Burn your issue!"

Ever since Dr. Preus has become President, the magazine still contains much that is pure neoliberalism.

V PROTESTS AND THE PRESS

In attempting to support the myth that President Preus was changing the doctrine and theology of the Missouri Synod, neoliberals "protested" conservative theology and its proponents. We shall examine four of these protests with special emphasis

on the publication and dissemination of the protests throughout the synod.

A DECLARATION OF DETERMINATION

In October 1970, Bertwin L. Frey wrote what is known as the Declaration of Determination. We have mentioned it briefly in other connections. In summary, the Declaration disagrees that the conservative 125-year-old Missouri Synod position is tenable for our day. Although the language in the Declaration sounds orthodox and loving, conservatives knowledgeable in the change of definitions, recognized its distinctly neoliberal bias. In calling for reconciliation while differences continued, and in referring to "interpretations" of the Bible as not being "divisive of our fellowship in the Gospel," Dr. Frey clearly gave evidence of his neoliberal leanings.

Let us recall that this Declaration was written soon after the August 30-31, 1970, neoliberal meeting in River Forest, at which time it was decided that men with special abilities were needed to "write for clergy... Write well for a general church audience..." It is in this light that the following memo from Pastor Lueking to his contact men should be read. In referring to the Declaration, Pastor Lueking writes that "the attached statement expresses so well the application of the evangelical spirit to current problems. It was written the other day by a fellow pastor from Fairview, Ohio, Dr. Bertwin Frey. Pastor Frey's statement is spontaneous and unsolicited." (emphasis mine) Pastor Lueking had regular communication with Dr. Frey, yet he expects us to believe this was spontaneous!

The political implications of the Declaration as well as the mimicking of the neoliberal leadership becomes obvious in this memo from Nebraska neoliberal contact man, Pastor Robert Kamprath, to his contact men: "The attached is by Dr. Bertwin Frey... It is a spontaneous and unsolicited statement. If the statement strikes a responsive note in you, please sign and mail the enclosed card. One purpose is to gather signatures to this document and forward them to Dr. Preus and the Synodical Board of Directors." Let us make it clear that what is objectionable is not that neoliberals desire to gain support for their cause. What is objectionable is the fact that they attempt to do this under the cloak of spontaneity and unpolitical motivation!

In early 1971, President Preus was given the signatures affixed to the Declaration of Determination. Only 1400 pastors and laymen signed the document with signatures duplicated and some

phoney. And of the pastors who signed, over 85% had graduated from the seminary in St. Louis. Now some may think that 1400 signatures are not very many. But two facts militate against that contention. The first fact is that the Declaration was sent not only to most district contact men and from there to every neoliberal person known, but, more importantly, it also was mailed to the 1800 subscribers of the Fuerbringer-Lueking-Koenig newsletter. 1800! And the document itself could accumulate only 1400 signatures.

The second reason is truly more compelling. A number of conservative officials and pastors in the LCMS signed their name to a letter, now known as Crossroads, written by Professor Walter A. Maier, son of the former Lutheran Hour speaker. Crossroads supported the Statement of Confessional and Biblical Principles, sent out by President Preus as a summary of the doctrinal stance of the 125-year-old LCMS. Those who endorsed Crossroads numbered over a quarter of a million a few months after it had been mailed. And the endorsements were still being received at a rate of approximately 1400 a day in the fourth month after Crossroads was mailed. When one realizes that Crossroads support of the Statement not only stands in direct opposition and contradiction to the neoliberal stance of the Declaration of Determination and the faculty majority at St. Louis Seminary, the neoliberal myth that conservatives are a minority is shown to be what it really is--one more neoliberal misrepresentation.

B A CALL TO OPENNESS AND TRUST (COT)

The document A Call To Openness and Trust (COT) is interesting not only for its neoliberal theology but also for its title. The conservative finds it ironic indeed that the same people who ousted vice-President Nickel from the neoliberal August 30-31, 1970, meeting should then conduct a closed meeting and also find fault with the conservatives for their lack of trust. Besides the ironic title, the theology of the document was "horrible" (Scharlemann).

The horribleness lies not only in the fact that the theology is unlutheran and quite confused but also that members of the Missouri Synod wrote and supported it. The Commission on Theology and Church Relations summarized five areas where the document was deficient:

1. The document fails to distinguish adequately between God's presence in judgment and His presence in grace.
2. The document does not observe the necessary limitations to free-

- dom and diversity within a confessional church.
3. The document appears to hold that the recognition of Christian discipleship is an adequate basis for altar and pulpit fellowship.
4. The document downgrades the importance of true Christian doctrine, not only by its failure to distinguish between true and false doctrine, but especially by treating articles of faith as open questions.
5. The document challenges the synod's historic understanding of what it means to be a confessional church.... Our synod has regarded it as inadequate to 'identify with' the historic confessions of the Lutheran Church without also subscribing to their doctrinal content.

Gospel At Stake

Districts in the synod also repudiated the contents of the document. The Montana District even passed a resolution censuring three faculty members of the St. Louis Seminary for involvement in COT. In his Brother to Brother of February 11, 1970, President Preus described the feelings of conservatives exactly, not only towards the contents of the document but also towards the polarization which resulted.

These brothers are not content with meeting, organizing, and soliciting funds but also bring in the secular press to help carry out their program. They have ignored existing synodical channels and procedures for voicing their concerns and have issued instead a statement in which they establish for themselves a highly dubious confessional stance, call for a new definition of the doctrine of the real presence of the body and blood of our Lord in the Sacrament of the Altar, with a concurrent practice of open Communion, and attack our synodical stand regarding the inerrancy of Holy Scripture, a subject upon which our synod has spoken clearly and repeatedly.

Make no mistake about this, brothers. What is at stake is not only inerrancy, but the Gospel of Jesus Christ itself, the authority of Holy Scripture, the 'quia' subscription to the Lutheran Confessions, and perhaps the very continued existence of Lutheranism as a confessional and confessing movement in the Christian world.

The accurate analysis of the protesting conservatives throughout synod led to the document being discussed at the 1971 synodical convention in Milwaukee. Because COT so clearly represents the neoliberal theological stance, Resolution 2-50 of

the Milwaukee Convention clearly reveals the synod's stance toward neoliberal teachings:

RESOLVED, that the synod repudiate the inadequacies of "A Call To Openness And Trust;" and be it further RESOLVED, That the synod admonish all those who have disturbed the synod by circulating this document; and be it finally RESOLVED, That the synod ask those who are publicly identified with this document to publicly assure the synod through the office of the President of the synod that they are faithful to the confessional stance of the synod and repudiate the inadequacies pointed out by the CTCR.

So far, not one of the proponents of COT has complied with the request of the synod and repudiated the inadequacies pointed out by the CTCR. The simple reason is that what the CTCR and the synod see as inadequacies, the proponents of COT see as good neoliberal theology.

That the names of those associated with COT are public is undeniable. One newspaper article stated that St. Louis neoliberal Pastor Warren W. Gritzke headed the committee which formulated COT: "Other signers included Professor Holland Jones of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis and the Rev. Omar Stuenkel, managing editor of the Lutheran Witness." (Emphasis mine) In the January 1970 edition of the Fuerbringer-Lueking-Koenig MFUE, other names included Norbert Firnhaber and Paul Brammeier.

And we could continue with names of persons from the St. Louis Seminary, Concordia Teachers College, River Forest; Valparaiso University; etc. who willingly and gladly assented to the contents of the document COT. Not one of them repudiated its inadequacies as shown by the CTCR. Conservative layman Chet Swanson wrote to Dr. Bertwin Frey:

When COT was repudiated at the Milwaukee Convention, we suddenly discovered we could not 'trust' the 'openness'. There were no signatures and, after Milwaukee, no open advocates. Prior to synod's repudiation, the advocates were very much in evidence. In private and in public they spoke and wrote for 'the call to openness.' Since last July, the advocacy has no longer been open. . . . Nor were there any open apologies for public withdrawals by the former advocates of COT.

C THE CLEVELAND REBELLION

On February 7, 1972, 24 pastors, including Dr. Bertwin Frey, wrote an open letter to President Preus, deploring the manner in which he conducted the inquiry. The doctrinal content of the protest

was pure neoliberalism. The 24 pastors urged "great latitude" in the area of using methodology in interpreting Scripture. Especially distressing was their contention that "faculty members of a theological seminary should be free to explore with students... various approaches to scripture, a variety of views on the meaning of the Lutheran Confessions, and, above all, their own personal convictions on matters of doctrine and practice..." By the way, this was written during the time when Professor Herbert Mayer led a stomp-out of professors from the chapel service while a sermon was being preached by conservative professor Richard Klamm.

Even the meeting at which this protest originated was far from fair. As Pastor Horst Hoyer wrote:

It was my regrettable experience to witness a presentation which practiced an 'oppression' which the proponents tried to pin on the administration. What I witnessed was anything but 'openness and trust.' In my opinion the presentation was misleading, one-sided, and subjective and gave no chance whatsoever for opportunity to hear the other side.

What also upset conservatives was the manner in which the letter was made public. It was given to the Cleveland secular press, even before President Preus had received a copy of it! In protest, one church council wrote to neoliberal District President Arthur H. Ziegler: "The tactics included, according to sources at the scene, the release of the open letter to the public press even before this communication had been sent and received by the president to whom the letter was addressed."

Because of the behavior of the 24, and because their protest accused President Preus of incorrect procedure in appointing the Fact Finding Committee, Pastor Paul Streufert, member of the Fact Finding Committee and at the time vice-president of synod, wrote the following:

Your 'Open Letter' to Dr. Preus is one of the most distressing experiences in my long ministry of more than 44 years. Since 1938 I have served the synod in various capacities. In those years I have seen much that did not edify the church. Your 'Open Letter' destroys. It violates the high principle of churchmanship that one should expect from Lutheran clergymen. . . . Regardless of the issues, it was reprehensible that your letter was given to the news media before the letter was mailed to Dr. Preus. . . . Your letter is reprehensible because of paragraph six. The Milwaukee Convention settled the matter of the appointment of a Fact Finding Committee.

In Resolution 2-23 the synod supported Dr. Preus in his decision, and yet, you condemn him and publicly pronounce his action as 'unwise and unwarranted.'

Because of his total inaction against the "Rebellion" neoliberal Ohio District President Arthur H. Ziegler came under strong conservative criticism. After writing several times to President Ziegler, one layman again wrote him stating: "As far as I can determine, we have received no response from your office and indication that you are heeding our urgent request [to admonish the Cleveland 24]. We get only silence. Our church took action in the form of an overture to their district convention resolving that President Arthur Ziegler and President John Baumgaertner [neoliberal English District President] be requested to publicly repudiate the 2-7-72 open letter of the Cleveland group' and to take whatever steps are required to secure the public withdrawal and recantation by the co-signers or to instigate procedures for discipline with loving but firm pastoral concern shown to all under their doctrinal supervision."

A short time later a group of conservative pastors of the Ohio District together protested what the neoliberal "Rebellious 24" had done and said. Specific objections were:

1. The use of 'An Open Letter... is a grievous offense because they have neither proven their points or criticism nor used the channels of the church to correct whatever they believe to be wrong.
2. They speak only of a spirit-given fellowship, but do not refer to the ordination vow which all pastors of the synod have taken and the signing of the Synodical Constitution together with the Constitutional requirements imposed on all congregations which voluntarily join synod.
3. (The letter expresses) an individualism not granted by the scriptures, the Lutheran Confessions, and Synod's Handbook.
4. They criticize Synod's President for unwise and unwarranted actions regarding his action to find the facts and investigate the teachings of the St. Louis Seminary despite the fact that the Milwaukee Convention in Resolution 2-23 shows the president's obligation to supervise the doctrine of all those employed by synod and resolved to commend the president for his pastoral concern for doctrinal unity and purity and support his judgment and action in appointing a Fact Finding Committee.

D ROCKY MOUNTAIN FOUR

Neoliberals like the "Rocky Mountain Four"

(Pastors Luther W. Roehrs, Gerhard H. Munding-er, E. J. Friedrich, and Raymond Buck) also used the secular press as a tool for protesting, and propaganda. Their reason for making their protest public was because "they have been frustrated by the official Missouri Synod church press." The action of the 'Four' is only one example of the neoliberal attempt by means of the public press to humiliate, criticize, embarrass, attack, and ridicule conservative theologians, administration, and doctrine.

VI USE OF THE PUBLIC PRESS

A book twice this size could be written and filled with articles from secular newspapers with totally neoliberal biases. We are not speaking only of religious publications outside the Missouri Synod, like the liberal Christian Century or Una Sancta. We also speak of secular newspapers put to use at the request of the neoliberal propaganda machinery.

A PUBLICATIONS

That the neoliberals were certainly using the secular press is beyond doubt. In October 1970 neoliberal layman Robert Madigan wrote Pastor Lueking concerning the Fact Finding Committee which President Preus chose. Because the members of the committee were of the conservative 125-year-old Missouri stance, Mr. Madigan wanted to "call the maximum attention" to that fact "as quickly as possible; and I mean both in the secular and church press." Mr. Madigan thought that such press coverage would "tend to soften public reaction to these punitive decisions we can expect from the committees."

Newspapers

Because the neoliberal seminary was in St. Louis, the Post-Dispatch and Globe-Democrat newspapers became major recipients for news leaks from the seminary. After reading the neoliberal one-sided articles written by the Post and Globe it certainly appears that seminary faculty majority professors and administrators were providing slanted information for the religion editors.

On March 1, 1972, the Post-Dispatch revealed what neoliberal "seminary administrators are privately questioning" concerning President Preus' actions. It was editor James Adam's articles which gave neoliberal interpretations of the seminary situation through the mouth of Dr. Arlis Ehlen. It was the Post-Dispatch which remarkably printed sections from a letter which neoliberal Board of Con-

trol chairman Dr. Loose had addressed to his congregational members in Florida. On October 1, 1970, the Globe-Democrat quoted Pastor Richard Koenig that he expected little results from the inquiry. The article also characterized the inquiry as a heresy trial of moderates.

But neoliberal contacts with the religious editors of the secular press were not limited to the St. Louis area. Recalling that even President Tietjen had been the editor of the American Lutheran and publicity director of LCUSA goes a long way in helping us to realize how contacts were made with secular newspapers. Pastor Lueking's pipelines flowed regularly toward the Milwaukee Journal, basically biased toward the neoliberal point of view. Rather than review the many slanted articles which religious editor David Runge wrote, we will content ourselves with one instance of biased and untruthful reporting and of the refusal to correct that misrepresentation.

On September 1, 1969, concerned men in the synod met together to listen to conservatives speak out on issues confronting the church. The leaders of the meeting made it clear that it was not a protest meeting: "Over and over again, participants in the meeting emphasized that this was not a protest meeting. The goals are positive, not negative." But when the Milwaukee Journal described the meeting as a "National Protest Meeting," rumors began which suggested that "such a gathering would be more divisive than healing."

Two pastors wrote "Religious News Service" complaining of editor Runge's coverage of the meeting as a "Protest Meeting" despite the fact that "several of the men involved told him explicitly that this was not true." Editor Runge's report that the meeting attempted to organize conservatives for the 1971 Milwaukee convention drew the following response from an organizer of the meeting:

This letter comes as a complaint against the accuracy and honesty of the reporting of David Runge which seems to be a favorite source for RNS from the Missouri Synod... The purported 'organization outline of conservatives for the 1971 convention' as reported by a prominent source--obviously, the Rev. Dean Lueking--is a creation of the liberals [neoliberals] apparently to try to stir up sympathy for them and antagonism against the so-called 'organized' conservatives. Dean Lueking who heads up the liberal [neoliberal] LCMS group is obviously the source of much of Mr. Runge's slime against the LCMS.

Newsweeklies

One example of the neoliberal slant of the news-weekly Time will suffice. (Emphasis is mine) On September 25, 1972, Time's editorial on the controversy was entitled, "Civil War In The Synod." President Preus is characterized as "aggressively orthodox," while Dr. John Tietjen is the "moderate president of... Concordia Seminary." Dr. Arlis Ehlen, who allowed for the denial of the dry land and large waves at the Red Sea crossing, is spoken of as questioning, "the historical accuracy of certain details of the crossing of the Red Sea."

Recalling the protests of many years directed toward the St. Louis Seminary, and also the 1971 convention at Milwaukee instructing President Preus to make a report on the inquiry within a year, the following is most interesting: "Then this month Preus declared war on President Tietjen himself, along with a majority of his faculty. Preus unleashed a torrid 160-page attack..." In contrast to this impression of a huge monster breathing out fiery accusations, the reality of the situation is that President Preus mailed the Report of the Fact Finding Committee in compliance with resolutions of the 1971 Milwaukee Convention. The article sarcastically concludes that the attempt by the conservatives to turn back neoliberal theology "would be no less a miracle than the parting of the Red Sea."

The other large newsweekly Newsweek was fed misinformation and propaganda by neoliberals. On July 12, 1971, an article described the neoliberals as a "comparatively, disorganized" group of men. Bear in mind that this article is written almost one full year after the neoliberal August 30-31, 1970, meeting in River Forest. President Paul Zimmerman is described as a "fundamentalist," and Pastor Koenig is quoted as saying that "all the moderates really have going for them is the good word passed along from brother to brother."

Lester Kinsolving

Probably the most co-operative of the religious news writers for Missouri neoliberals was an Episcopalian priest, Lester Kinsolving. His strongly-worded articles written against the Missouri Synod and President Preus more than match the equivocation of Lutheran Forum. In an editorial of April 25, 1970, entitled, "Freedom now--With Chairman JAO," editor Kinsolving writes on the inquiry. Before reading his editorial, recall that the Milwaukee Convention repudiated the document "Openness and Trust," that no person has apologized for that document, and that Pastor Richard Neuhaus is a neoliberal self-appointed leader.

President Preus now appears to be launching a major Inquisition. When 100 Missouri Syn-

od clergy led by Pastor Warren Gritzke of suburban Webster Grove, issued an eminently sensible, and by any reasonable standard, orthodox and charitable, statement entitled 'Call to Openness and Trust,' President Preus exploded in print.

The tense atmosphere of fear and conformity has also been protested by Alfred Fuerbringer, brother of the famed editor of Time magazine, and former President of Concordia Seminary here.

Pastor Richard Neuhaus of Brooklyn contends that the present denominational leadership 'manifests institutional paranoia' and that Preus has been 'evading honest exchange about theological differences and using his office in a covert re-shuffling of the synodical power structure.'

Yet even as the Missouri Synod boils over, there is still a sense of humor retained by many of the younger clergy and seminarians who are conscientiously unable to tailor their brains to accommodate the Gospel according to JAO Preus.

So, noting his first three initials, they have fashioned the wry slogan: 'Freedom now - with Chairman JAO!'

The truth concerning the phrase "Chairman JAO" was reported by Affirm in its December 1972 issue:

The students at Springfield Seminary jokingly and affectionately refer to their President as 'Chairman JAO,' and again the title is supplied to a yellow journalist, who knows and cares nothing about the truth or the welfare of the Missouri Synod, and he in turn viciously blackens the good name of a man and churchbody in a nationally syndicated column his prejudices all the time fed by Missouri Synod Lutherans.

After Cincinnati layman Chet Swanson read the Kinsolving article, he wrote an open letter in April 1970, entitled, The Strange Scale of Liberalism [Neoliberalism]. He concentrated on the myth that COT was "eminently sensible" and "by any reasonable standard orthodox and charitable...":

There is not much doubt that some standards would rate the 'Openness & Trust' statement quite favorable. The typical Unitarian would applaud it. The devotees of existentialism and humanism would cluck approvingly. And,

if they have not already done so, it would be expected that NCC would make a pronouncement which would support such a delightful show of 'ecumenical sensitivity' as was entertained in the 'Call to Openness.'

But to apply the word 'orthodox' to the 'Openness & Trust' document is to strain, to bend and to slant 'any reasonable standard.'

This essay, then, is to suggest that the 'Strange Scale' of Kinsolving (and of most liberals [neoliberals]) is not reasonable at all. Not if reasonable is to have some connotation of 'normal,' 'widely accepted,' 'standard' or 'objective.'

E. H. Zimmerman

In November 1972, Indiana President E. H. Zimmerman questioned the District Presidents as to whom submitted the following to the secular press. His other comments are also interesting:

Many newspaper headlines read like the following: 'Drive Aims to Unseat Lutheran Official' (Hartford Courant, September 21, 1972) and 'Moderates Seek to Oust Preus' (Saint Louis Globe Democrat, September 22, 1972). This article states that: a group of 50 self-described 'moderates' in the 2.8 million member LCMS, has launched a drive to unseat the denomination's President, the Reverend Dr. Jacob A. O. Preus, who has charged that false doctrine is being taught at Concordia Seminary....

Headline from Knoxville: 'Moderate Lutheran Faction Seeks to Unseat Lutheran Church President.' The article begins: 'A drive has developed in the strife-torn Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod... etc.'

Well, I wonder what gives Richard Koenig or anyone the right to carry the internal problems of the Church to the secular press, particularly in view of the Statement on Ethics' Synodical Resolutions and just plain Christian principles. We can go on and on. I have brought with me (to Saint Louis) 16 to 18 inches of file folders, filled with articles like these, and I constantly find myself asking the questions 'how' and 'why.' In other words, how does this information get to the newspapers, and for what purpose was this information fed to the public - to glorify God or to edify the Body of Christ?

Church editors usually report what they are

told. In defense of these writers, their reporting runs no higher than their source. Columnists often editorialize on the news they receive, without understanding what the Church's internal problems are, and without sympathizing with them. Certain columnists seem to be particularly antagonistic toward the President of Synod, and particularly supportive of the 'moderate movement.' I am thinking, for example, of men like James E. Adams, Religion Editor of the Saint Louis Post Dispatch. How does it happen that James Adams knows so much about what goes on both at the Seminary and within the Council, as well as elsewhere in the Church? How does it happen that he has access to privileged information, and even prints it, before it is made public, through the regular Public Relations channels of the Church?

I have many columns in my files written by Willmar Thorkelson (Minneapolis Star), David Runge (Milwaukee Journal), George Plagenz (Cleveland Press), James Shannon (Minneapolis Tribune), Dorothy Newell (Patriot Ledger), Kenneth Woodward (Detroit Free Press), Robert Teuscher (Saint Louis Globe Democrat), James Bowman (Chicago Daily News), and others around the country. The same questions keep popping up - 'who' and 'why'? Many of these columns are extremely derogatory, and carry the 'moderate' position. 'Who' and 'why' are good questions, and we ought to be thinking about them very carefully.

I used to be more than a little agitated by men like Lester Kinsolving, and yet, after reading his columns over a period of time, I am not particularly concerned about them any more. For one thing, he ridicules and downgrades almost every denomination at will. He carries on his own little battles against the historic Christian faith.

....the secular press is not interested in promoting the Gospel, harmony or understanding. Newspapers, apparently, are interested in selling newspapers, and they feed on controversy. The secular world has other ethics and standards, as we, ourselves, in the Council have admitted. We cannot prevent secular writers from saying what they want to say, but we can avoid feeding the secular press articles and information that creates confusion, unrest and division. We can avoid going to the public press with matters that only the Church understands, and that can only be resolved by the Church.

To use the secular press to voice our dissent and dissatisfaction with the President of the Synod, the theological position of the Synod, or with fellow members of the Synod, I think is reprehensible. It is a violation of basic Christian ethics. It should be obvious to all that articles of this kind do not intend to uphold, edify or glorify. Instead, they help to destroy the witness of the Church. One cannot help but wonder about the motivation of so-called Church leaders, who peddle their gossip to the secular press, for the purpose of letting the world know about the troubles of the Church and their own pet peeves. Does it say anything to you at all that most of the articles reviewed for this presentation are rather obviously one sided, and seem to have been fed to the press by those who are absolutely determined to carry out a threat made already at Denver (1969), and repeated many times since, namely: 'to fight Preus all the way to New Orleans, and to destroy him there?'

Cincinnati James Adams

It is a rare occasion indeed when secular newspaper articles present a balanced treatment of the conservative-neoliberal dilemma. One religious editor who has the reputation for balance is James Adams of the Cincinnati Post (not the James Adams of the St. Louis Post-Dispatch). His article of September 16, 1972 seemed so fair that conservatives sent copies to one another. Parts of the article follow:

The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod now is being shaken to its foundation stones by the classic Orthodox-liberal [conservative-neoliberal] struggle that altered the course of most other churches in America 50 years ago.

The Missouri Lutherans compose one of the last major bastions of theological conservatism. And these spiritual descendants of Martin Luther may change history again by preserving their creed and doctrine in their pristine state.

The issues are a bit more subtle in the Missouri Lutheran conflict than they were in the sixteenth century when Martin Luther defied the Roman Catholic Church. In fact, an outsider might well ask, 'What's the fuss all about?'

The difference can not be disparagingly dismissed as a bunch of 'Bible thumpers' attempt-

ting to stifle scholarship. There are highly competent scholars on both sides of the argument.

The controversy centers around the teaching of the faculty at the denomination's graduate Concordia Seminary in St. Louis. (Theological variances historically start in the seminary which produces the denomination's preachers and administrators.)

A Fact Finding Committee was set up to interrogate the 45 faculty members at Concordia. This caused cries of 'witch hunting' on the part of critics both within and without the church.

To put the matter in other words, Dr. Preus continued, 'the question is whether the Scriptures are the norm for our faith and life or whether the Gospel alone is that norm.'

But Dr. Preus saw 'with dismay' in the evidence presented by the Fact Finding Committee these aberrations at Concordia:

A false doctrine of the nature of the Holy Scriptures coupled with methods of interpretation which effectually erode the authority of the Scriptures.

A substantial undermining of the confessional doctrine of original sin by a de facto denial of the historical events on which it is based.

A permissiveness toward certain false doctrines.

A tendency to deny that Law is a normative guide for Christian behavior.

A conditional acceptance of the Lutheran Confessions.

A strong claim that the Seminary faculty need not teach in accord with the Synod's doctrinal stance as expressed in the Synod's official doctrinal statements and resolutions.

Referring to the findings as reflecting 'fundamental disagreement in the doctrine of the Holy Scriptures,' Dr. Preus requested the Synod to consider it a matter of utmost urgency and take 'decisive and swift action under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.' The synod will meet in convention next year.

Dr. Tietjen, seminary president, flatly refused to 'indicate my position on a series of issues' requested by Dr. Preus.

'I have ascertained the positions of individual faculty members and have assured myself through personal discussion that members of the faculty are not teaching contrary to their confessional commitment,' Dr. Tietjen wrote the Synod president.

The whole question of academic freedom could be-and has been-raised in the Lutheran controversy. Shouldn't a theologian teach as his conscience and understanding dictate rather than subscribing to a set of guidelines?

But a deeper question arises. Does a group of believers have the right to collect around a creed and then pay people to teach it?

C. S. Lewis in an address to an assembly of Anglican priests put it this way:

'I insist that wherever you draw the lines, bounding lines must exist, beyond which your doctrine will cease either to be Anglican or Christian: and I suggest also that the lines come a great deal sooner than many modern priests think. I think it is your duty to fix the lines clearly in your own minds: and if you wish to go beyond them you must change your profession.'

'This is your duty,' Lewis continued, 'not specially as Christians or as priests but as honest men... We never doubted that the unorthodox opinions were honestly held; what we complain of is your continuing your ministry after you have come to hold them.'

Substitute the word 'Lutheran' for 'Anglican' in Lewis' comment and you can better understand what a large number of Missouri Lutherans are trying to say.

B THE CIVIL WAR IN THE MISSOURI SYNOD

Even editor Kinsolving's ridicule and defamation of the conservatives falls far short of what Christian Herald printed in January and February 1971. The article was written by Kenneth L. Woodward. Neoliberals titled it as an objective outsider's view of the situation within the LCMS. It would be difficult to criticize the bias, defamation, and misrepresentation of this article too strongly.

After reading the article a conservative pastor wrote:

One would scarcely take note of this, just another shallow, badly informed and prejudiced account of the affairs of our Synod, if it were

not for the fact that the two articles were actually sent to all pastors of the Atlantic District by Mr. Robert Madigan, a lay member of our church and an intimate of the Lueking, Koenig group. Most of the material was supplied by Lueking, Madigan and their neoliberal friends. This makes the whole matter more serious, for the articles are filled with false innuendo, distortion and mistakes. They are written with a strong bias against the president of our synod and against the course he has taken in offering leadership to our church body. In almost every item treated, President Preus is made to look inept, devious, unfeeling, narrow minded and even perverse.... On the other hand, all 'liberal' [neoliberal] opponents of Preus, who are quoted, are treated with great respect, e.g., Martin Marty, Dean Lueking, Alfred von Rohr Sauer, and even Richard Koenig. They are called 'moderates,' distinguished scholars, representatives of true Christian ecumenism, more concerned about social witness, brilliant, socially active and highly talented. In all, there are more than 80 examples of false innuendos, slurs, ad hominem arguments, growl words, and unverified or misleading judgments. There are at least 28 examples of errors of fact in the articles.

The deceptiveness of the neoliberal movement is evidenced by this statement from the February 15, 1971, newsletter of Messiah Lutheran Church, Princeton, New Jersey. After stating that President Preus was elected by a "rigged convention at Denver," the newsletter goes on "to help" people become informed. "If you want more information, you can get an outsider's perceptive analysis of this 'Missouri Civil-War' in the January and February issues of the Christian Herald." (emphasis mine) An outsider took the credit line, but merely edited informational garbage supplied by disloyal insiders like Pastor Lueking. The following facts present one example of how the neoliberal political machinery works in getting the secular press biased toward neoliberalism.

Mr. Kenneth Woodward is the religious editor of Newsweek. The Newsweek article of January 4, 1971, characterized President Paul Zimmerman's "theological reputation" as resting "largely on his efforts to prove that God created the world in six days of 24 hours each." Prior to another Newsweek article of August 3, 1971, Pastor Dean Lueking was told that editor Woodward would be "coming out with the right slant."

In preparation for the Christian Herald neoliberal attack against President Preus, Pastor Dean Lueking spoke with Kenneth Woodward on the phone

in a lengthy conversation on October 23, 1970, a full two months before the article would appear. By December 11, 1970, Robert Madigan had made arrangements to get page proofs of the article suitable for offset reproduction along with a negative of the illustration and title. By February 1971, the Stamford Group sent reprints of the article to pastors in the Atlantic District.

On December 20, 1970, the month before Christian Herald appeared, Pastor Dean Lueking wrote to contact men: "Blockbuster coming in late December: Christian Herald is running a two-part article by Ken Woodward (religion editor of Newsweek) entitled: 'The Civil War in the Missouri synod.' Don't miss it. It has very significant potential. Reprints will be available." It is interesting to note that after Dr. Ehlen's contract was not renewed and he began his trek around the country, one of the documents he passed out wherever he went, was--you guessed it.

These facts depict the depth of neoliberal political maneuvering not only for control of the administration but also in the wide use of the media. It must be kept in mind that the complex array of neoliberal machinery sent thousands of pamphlets into homes around the country. This was possible with the lists of addresses which the neoliberal leadership received from contact men in the districts. Most important, the belittling of the conservatives' characters needs to be remembered. And now examine the next two quotations:

1. Refrain from the publication and other unauthorized uses of private correspondence and discussion;

Bring to an end the character assassination in which individual persons and publications continue to persist;

Avoid the practice of circularizing individuals and organizations of the Synod with materials that tend to create divisions and undermine confidence;

Bring to an end the agitation of our church life by persons serving an ideology rather than the interests of theology;

Discontinue the practice of misrepresenting the theological positions and expressions of persons who have been called to the task of applying the resources of theology to our common life.

2. Many of our members have been receiving unasked for materials in the mail over the past four or five months....

It doesn't take a Hawkshaw to see that someone or some group is spending much time and money to plant questions, suspicion, and general confusion in your minds about issues in our Synod in general and my own ministry in particular.

Literally thousands of lay members of our Synod all over the country have had their mail boxes invaded by these documents which are sent out by a small core of well-organized, [conservatives?] well-financed, people who have assigned themselves the task of being the teachers of the whole church.

I strongly oppose the sending of documents of any sort to the homes of parishoners without the knowledge or permission of the officers and pastor of the congregation. These

materials all have a particular point of view and are so frequently marked by loveless attacks on people of good standing in our Synod. Since most of us lack the full context to evaluate these articles, the result is greater confusion and bewilderment. The cause of Christ and the unity of His people are not served by these tactics.'

The first quotation is taken from a statement made on the Feast of the Ascension, 1967, by the faculty of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis. The second quotation is taken from a letter written by Pastor Dean F. Lueking of Grace Lutheran Church, River Forest. The letter is dated July 30, 1971--the month of the Milwaukee Convention. Though it is clear to the reader, let it be said that these neoliberals were busy doing the very thing they were condemning.

CHAPTER 11

MILWAUKEE

In July 1971, the LCMS met in Milwaukee for its biennial convention. Important questions that needed to be answered centered on fellowship with the ALC, ecumenical relationships with other church bodies and groups, Mission:Life, the seminary inquiry, and the binding nature of synodically adopted doctrinal resolutions.

The convention resolved to continue ALC fellowship but decided that there be no new implementation of fellowship between the two synods. The feeling of the delegates was that the ALC should have more time to reconsider its position on the ordination of women. If ALC continued to practice it, then the delegates warned that the fellowship resolution may be terminated in New Orleans.

Only a change of 43 votes were needed to defeat the resolution on the ALC fellowship at the previous convention in Denver, 1969. Many believe that at least 150 votes would have gone the other way except for the constant flow of pro-fellowship ideas from the podium and the rumor that was passed around that since Dr. Preus was elected President fellowship could be managed.

As one lay delegate from Wyoming wrote after the convention: "I didn't think there was anything that could shake my faith, but I'll tell you, at Denver when I saw a fully calculated and expertly produced effort from the platform of five synodical vice-presidents, black power, young girls, young men, opening prayer, the essayist, etc. aimed at all one thing--an emotional appeal for fellowship.

it shook my faith!"

The reason why conservatives are hesitant to implement fellowship is that the ALC, for the most part, is controlled and dominated by neoliberals and is doing nothing about it. Many a person has recognized the fact that as LCMS becomes more neoliberal, it mirrors more and more the ALC and LCA doctrinal stance--a stance identical to that of the faculty majority at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis. One ALC laywoman wrote: "Why are ministers who question and doubt God's Word being turned out from the seminaries which we support with our hard-earned salaries? For the Lord's work we give joyfully but we cannot support such ungodly causes."

To discover the ecumenical goals of LCMS neoliberals, one only has to realize where the ALC and LCA are going officially, and the future of an LCMS controlled by neoliberals will be known. The purpose of this section, though, is to give a few examples of the LCMS neoliberal political machinery prior to, during, and after the 1971 Milwaukee Convention.

Recall the neoliberal executive session of August 30-31, 1970, and the intermediate goals discussed: "The Steering Committee should immediately establish a list of desired accomplishments at the following meetings: 1971 Convention of Synod in Milwaukee.... These objectives must be stated in practical terms: Elections; Convention memorials and resolutions; Influencing the selection of

convention themes, essayists, and other presentations."

Pastor Lueking wasted no time in getting started. Less than one month later Al Buls was put in charge of nominations for the Milwaukee convention. In the same month, a conference phone call included a discussion on the nine month away convention in Milwaukee including questions on which overtures each district passed, and who are the delegates from each district.

On November 24, 1970, one of Pastor Lueking's memos to district contact men included information sheets on nominations for Milwaukee along with criteria for who should be elected. Pastor Lueking also requested access for the list of those delegates to Milwaukee. Pastor Don Hoger suggested to neoliberal leaders what should be done prior to Milwaukee. He wrote: "...I suggested to Dick Koenig awhile back that what someone should produce is a series of Resolutions for the convention Workbook of 1971. They should be positive and evangelical, written in a popular style so that the 'silent majority' especially the lay delegates can understand and identify with them at their first reading. Of course, fifty-thousand references to the Bible and Book of Concord must be attached... Dick refers often to Mueller as the type of the middle person we are trying to reach. Now, compare a resolution that is a diatribe against the ALC vs one that says thanks in a doxological way for getting us this far in our contact with fellow Lutherans--which one would Mueller take to?" EVEN THE MANNER IN WHICH RESOLUTIONS WERE WRITTEN BECAME POLITICALLY MOTIVATED!

I STRATEGY MEETING JUNE 4, 5 1970

The neoliberals had their political strategy meeting for Milwaukee on June 4 and 5, 1971, at Grace Lutheran Church, River Forest, Illinois. The following is an agenda and a list of the members of the coordinating committees.

"1. Morning Prayers; 2. Overview of MFUE plans for Milwaukee Convention; 3. Reports (a) Task Forces, (b) Floor Speaker Strategy, (c) Communications Network; 4. Coordination and Coalition (a) Black Clergy, (b) MTM, (c) Charismatics (d) LCUSA, (a) Board of World Mission (b) Board of Youth Ministries, (c) Board of Higher Education, (d) Board of Parish Education; 5. Finances: Present Balance and projected expenses; 6. Publications & Public Relations-Materials needed during and after Milwaukee Convention, Headquarters Room, Staff, contact with church and secular press; 7. Elections: Floor Nominations for key

elections--St. Louis Seminary Board of Control, Synodical Board of Directors, Board of World Mission, Concordia Teachers College, River Forest, Board of Control, Board of Appeals, Convention Nominations, CTCR; 8. Crisis Strategy; Plan communications if ALC Fellowship rescinded, LCMS withdrawn from LCUSA, etc.; 9. Post-Milwaukee: Evaluation of District Network system, publications, looking toward New Orleans; 10. Other Business; 11. Closing Prayers."

The coordinating committee leaders were Pastors Frey, Larson and Lueking. Under their direction the following task forces and participants were set up. Doctrine: Ed Krentz, Chm., Herbert Bouman, Robert Bertram, Dale Hansen, Walter Bouman. Church Relations: Richard Jungkuntz, Chm., Herbert Hohenstein, Richard Caemmerer, Synodical Administration: Arnold Wessler, Chm., Al Buls, Kurt Biel. Constitutional Matters: Arth Repp, Chm., Herbert Mayer. Floor Speakers: Paul Harms, E. J. Friedrich. Communications: Cy Wismar, Larry Neeb, Kurt Grotheer, Milford Brelje.

The minute plans even down to details of what needs to occur on the floor if the ALC resolution was defeated were arranged beforehand. Not long after, Dr. Frey and Dr. Lueking sent out A New Song pamphlet giving the neoliberal points of view on which memorials to support in the various areas.

II RESULTS OF NEOLIBERAL PLANNING

A lay delegate from the Illinois District wrote his reactions to the political activity of the neoliberals on the floor of the convention: "Dr. Preus, our president, showed that he has fine character and is a Christian gentleman. He conducted each session with great dignity and displayed equal concern for each speaker. He was insulted from the floor and saw many attempts to erode the office of the president by amending proposed resolutions so that he, as president could not act without the Council of Presidents. Several times he was completely ensnared in Robert's Rules of Order by the Mickey Mouse tactics of the so-called advisors in the back of the room who were led by [Herbert] Schmidt, [Walter] Wolbrecht, and [Herbert] Hohenstein, whose names I will not dignify with a title. The above were assisted by Lueking of River Forest in maneuvering speakers to the microphones and in directing the gallery in disruptive applause. Throughout the sessions, Dr. Preus showed great patience, and if anything, too much Christian concern for those opposing his position."

This writer attended the sessions and observed

Dr. Bertwin Frey directing neoliberals on the floor on how to vote. Since Dr. Frey was not on the floor of the convention, his plans for action were taken to the delegates by persons on the floor who passed his messages along. Evidence for these actions is ample. Neoliberal Pastor Kurt V. Grotheer, an advisory delegate to Milwaukee bragged about how he sat "with Tietjen, Repp, Fuerbringer, and Caemmerer. In that way I was pretty well informed as to procedure." Pastor Grotheer's other comments make it clear that "procedure" was the relaying of "quick information to voting delegates in the event of a sudden change. . . ."

Slanted Press

One area in which the neoliberals were particularly effective was with press. Even our own LCMS public relations department was biased in its news reporting by neoliberal interpretations of what occurred on the floor. After reading some of the synodical news releases, one received the impression that President Preus was defeated at every turn, that ALC fellowship got by without a hitch, and that synodically-adopted doctrinal resolutions were no longer binding. None of which was true.

During the week of the convention, the mother of Professor Scharlemann died. This writer recalls speaking with the wife of Professor Scharlemann when she mentioned what she had heard on KFZO (the St. Louis Seminary radio station) after returning to St. Louis for the funeral. Professor Herbert Mayer was giving a description of what happened at the convention. The problem was that Mrs. Scharlemann, who had attended the very meeting of which Professor Mayer was speaking, did not recognize at all the situation as Professor Mayer described it.

This continuous slanting by the media personnel of the actual occurrences on the convention floor did not go unnoticed by conservatives. Delegate A. E. Grunewald, wrote that he was "dismayed at the coverage of the public press and even more dismayed at the coverage which the convention press leaders gave to the convention in the telephone calls and other releases, which our people read back home. I found many people back home distressed at the proceedings of the convention as interpreted through the liberal press, which did not truly reflect the many good things the convention did for orthodoxy and truth."

One conservative professor later wrote:

I believe it is imperative that word be gotten to the conservatives as to what really happen-

ed at Milwaukee. . . . Anyone who was at Milwaukee can have no idea of the gap between what went on there and what was reported not only by the secular press but also by our PR people. I was there Monday and Tuesday and then had to leave to participate in a field trip. When I got back Saturday. . . I read the PR reports and listened to the taped reports of the phone releases--and I got very little sleep. Finally I made a few phone calls and got quite a different story. We've got to get the word out, because I'm sure others of the conservative brethren are as depressed as the men here.

Of course, the depression found among conservatives suited the neoliberals nicely. And for a while, it almost appeared that the neoliberal interpretation of the convention would win out. But only for a while.

President Preus himself wrote a letter to the ALC administration regretting "the fact that news releases or stories may have confused the issue." To give one example of many--President Preus had at first expressed his anxiety over the possibility that the resolution on binding doctrinal resolutions may not get passed. But later he rejoiced that the delegates passed two wonderful statements on the binding nature of synodically-adopted doctrinal resolutions. Even though bickering on the floor and deletions were experienced, the resolutions were still so strict for neoliberals that it appears that they attempted to reinterpret the situation.

The neoliberal reinterpretation was that President Preus remained displeased with the resolutions passed. Getting their information from neoliberal committee men, the Cleveland Press on July 17, 1971, said that "Dr. Preus' failure to win passage of the original hardline resolution represented a sharp defeat for the controversial leader, in the minds of most observers. At a news conference later, Dr. Preus expressed his displeasure with the resolution that was passed."

The news report gives not only a clear picture of the neoliberal slanted interpretation of the convention; but it is also an excellent example of the untruths perpetrated by neoliberals in order to make believe that they got what they wanted, when in reality such was not the case. The untruth referred to is the statement: "At a news conference later Dr. Preus expressed his displeasure with the resolution that was passed." This writer was at that news conference and taped President Preus' remarks. They are as follows: "Since the whereases and preamble [of the resolution] were all adopted, and the resolution said what was said at previous conventions, therefore, in a certain sense, the pre-

amble and whereases constitute an interpretation of the resolve. It is not quite correct to regard that as a major defeat!" Is this a man expressing displeasure with the resolution? Also, in the November 1971 Affirm President Preus made it very clear that he was pleased with the resolutions.

The convention upheld conservative theology on

every crucial issue. Even ALC fellowship is dependent upon the ALC changing its position on women ordination, which the convention resolved was basically not permissible. Any kind of collegialism which would take power out of the synodical President's hands was defeated. The convention strongly supported President Preus' decision to conduct an inquiry and also supported his judgment and action in appointing a Fact Finding Committee.

CHAPTER 12

NEW ORLEANS

Recall the neoliberal executive strategy planning meeting of August 31, 1970, at River Forest when it was mentioned that the committees would have to make long range plans for the New Orleans convention in 1973. Therefore, in March 1972, neoliberals "from all over the United States gathered to plan strategy, for the synod's 1973 convention in New Orleans when Dr. Preus will come up for reelection." (Cleveland Press, March 18, 1972)

Plans

As far back as 1971 neoliberal leaders were laying plans for the New Orleans convention. Neoliberal E. J. Friedrich wrote on September 10, 1971: "The time has come for us to close ranks and to swing into action. To do this effectively, however, we must have leadership, organization, well defined objectives, sound procedures, and adequate communication.

1. Kindly jot down on a separate sheet what you think of the present situation in our own efforts up to this point, and of the problems which are apt to confront our synod between now and the New Orleans convention.

2. Choose four men, either pastors or teachers, as your candidates for our central committee and write their names on the enclosed card. This is the committee which is to plan and promote our program and marshal our forces for the New Orleans convention.

As soon as possible after the tabulation has been completed, our new central committee will meet with our steering committee which served us so well at Milwaukee for an orderly transition into an organization with a broader base and wider support.

(emphasis mine) Pastor Friedrich's surprising openness gives plenty of evidence to demonstrate not only that the neoliberals are "politicking" for New Orleans, but that the "steering committee... served us so well at Milwaukee..."

After neoliberal Pastor Kurt V. Grotheer wrote to Pastor Lehnhardt of New Orleans that "fellows should meet a few days prior to the convention in order to plan strategy," conservative Pastor Lehnhardt contacted Dr. Frey and former seminary President Fuerbringer. Dr. Frey wrote back saying that arrangements would have to be made for "some space in the downtown area within a few blocks of convention headquarters. Pastor Lehnhardt was told to see Southern District neoliberal contact man Will Rinnert. Dr. Fuerbringer wrote saying that Pastor Lehnhardt would be kept in mind and "if either my associates or I see a need developing we shall get in touch with you about it."

Pastor Wilbur Hagebusch of Faith Lutheran, Milwaukee offered the following advice for New Orleans to neoliberal leaders on September 7, 1971: "1. Be sure the office site is as close to the Convention hall as possible; 2. Line up volunteers early; 3. Get commitments for the loan of equipment as soon as possible; 4. Have a person who will be in complete charge of all the operations; 5. Have a library of standard theological works on hand for consultation."

Pastor Raymond Moelter, Michigan district neoliberal contact man wrote to his contact men telling them: "We are hopeful of exerting a most positive influence prior to and at the New Orleans synodical convention. This takes money." By means of contact men stationed in the various districts, neoliberal political strategy was quickly taking shape. But the neoliberals knew that all would be lost or at least put in serious jeopardy if President Preus

Oswald Hoffmann

In August 1972, a neoliberal strategy meeting under the chairmanship of Pastors Lueking and Frey met in Des Plaines, Illinois. The result was the proposal for the neoliberal candidate for the nomination of the presidency of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. The man chosen was Dr. Oswald Hoffmann, well-known speaker for the Lutheran Hour. The neoliberals were unprepared for the conservative reaction from all parts of synod.

At first, there was a kind of unbelief that neoliberals would even consider Dr. Hoffmann. Officially, the neoliberal Forum said that Hoffmann was chosen because he has "never identified himself with either side in the present controversy, but is believed to favor a sharply different approach to synod problems from President Preus' hard-line policies." Remembering that these "hard-line policies" were given support by the Milwaukee Convention, we shall simply say that the above statement makes very little sense.

After refusing the nomination for President, Dr. Hoffmann made a surprising move as he released a statement to the press which presented a real enigma and hurt Dr. Hoffmann considerably. His news release contained these thoughts:

.... It is an honor to be included in the list of five nominees for the presidency of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. I thank the congregations which showed such confidence in me as to place my name in nomination for what must be regarded as an important office in the church.

I have not sought nomination and I do not seek election. I am a servant of the church, with a call from the Lord in my post as Lutheran Hour Speaker. I could not decline the nomination even before it was offered, since Synod has the right to nominate anyone it wishes. If it considers election to an office as a call from God, no Synod has the right, the Bylaws notwithstanding, to require anyone to accept election before it has taken place when such election requires a man to leave a post to which he feels he has been called by God Himself.

Nominees for posts that do require a decision to leave a position to which they have been called have not been asked by Synod, as far as I can recall, to commit themselves before election has taken place. Indeed, that kind of procedure has always been explicitly discouraged as a violation of our Synod's conception of a divine call, whether to the pas-

torate of a congregation or to a synodical office.

Since the statement to be signed at this time requires me to act in a manner contrary to Synod's long-standing position on the call of a pastor to any post, I cannot in good conscience comply.

As a servant of the church, I should be willing to have my name placed on the ballot, if that is the wish of Synod. But I cannot express at this time a willingness to serve if elected, since I believe that does violence to the call I now have as speaker on The Lutheran Hour.

No man of Dr. Hoffmann's prominence can afford to take such a position. He refuses to accept a nomination three months before a convention on the basis of conscience because he does not accept a call before he gets it. If he is consistent he would also refuse a nomination 12 hours before the election takes place because Handbook bylaw 2.129 states that "any delegate making a nomination from the floor shall have secured prior written consent of the candidate whom he wishes to nominate."

Dr. Hoffmann places himself outside of normal human and church procedures. Does he suggest that the other candidates who have accepted the nomination in the church itself is a procedure which is an offense to God and that they are insensitive to important spiritual standards in the church? We can only draw the conclusion that he is telling the neoliberals that he is open to a write-in ballot election. When he lectures his synod about polarization, he opens himself up to criticism of closing his eyes to false doctrine and aberrations taught by the neoliberals who are backing him.

It had been rumored that Dr. Hoffman would turn down the nomination and that the neoliberals would attempt to elect him at the convention by a blitz campaign. Dr. Hoffmann's press release allows for exactly that. It does not take a prophet to see him pictured as the great white knight on a grand white steed as the great peacemaker. In contrast, though the neoliberals paint President Preus as a trouble maker. This leaves Dr. Hoffman alone and the perfect man for taking the reins of the synod. Yet not all conservatives agree with this assessment of the circumstances.

We pray that LLL President Gus S. Melde is correct in his assessment of the situation:

The Lord has done and will continue to do great things through people. And, I can truly say the Lutheran Laymen's League thanks God for Dr. Oswald Hoffmann, speaker of The

Lutheran Hour. He is a man of God, sent by God, for the purpose of telling the people all over the world about the saving Gospel of Jesus Christ.

This is again verified when Dr. Hoffmann requested that his name not be placed on the ballot for the presidency of Synod. He has repeatedly stated he is not a candidate for the office, and does not seek election. The League is grateful to God for his decision. I am certain that the 40 million weekly listeners from whom he has a call also will greatly appreciate, and benefit from his decision.

I hope and pray this is final and that all the people who were promoting the speaker of The Lutheran Hour will now channel their energies and resources to the 'famine' in the world, that Dr. Hoffmann speaks of in his news release...

I would like to thank Dr. Hoffmann for his decision and would hope and pray that the people and congregations who supported him for the presidency of synod would now respect his wishes and would support Dr. Hoffmann in his ongoing ministry as speaker of the International Lutheran Hour. (Message From the President, The Lutheran Layman, May 1973).

Frey-Lueking Strategy

We have reported on the action of the Frey-Lueking group at the Milwaukee Convention. The synod should expect even more feverish political activity on the part of the neoliberals at New Orleans. Pastors Lueking and Frey sent out the following letter to contact men in the districts preparing them for activity at New Orleans. The misrepresentations found in the letter are highlighted by the date of the letter--February 26, 1973:

We are coming to you with a request because we believe you share our unhappiness about the direction in which our Missouri Synod has been moving since the 1969 Denver convention.

As you perhaps know, hundreds -- yes, thousands -- of laymen, teachers, pastors, and professors who stand for interlutheran cooperation and responsible biblical scholarship have been in touch with one another in recent years, hoping to stem the tide that threatens to change our Synod's confessional stance, so clearly spelled out in Article II of our constitution, and narrow our Synod into a sect.

Ultra-conservative forces were organized at Synod's New York convention in 1967, at Denver in 1969, and at Milwaukee in 1971. Much as we regret to admit it, the only way to cope with organized political activity in the church is with counter-organization. That's why some of us moderates have put our heads and hearts together in a coalition that represents many segments of synodical life. Pastors Norman Kretzmann, of Minneapolis, and Cyril Wismar, of Marblehead, Mass., headed up the establishment of the coalition, and the two of us who are forwarding this letter to you have been charged with acting in behalf of the moderates as we head for New Orleans and our Synod's convention, July 6-13, 1973. [emphasis mine]

Because effective action usually costs money, we come to you, without apology, for a contribution....

If you love our Synod and have genuine concern for its life and progress, we believe you will try to make a gift that will represent a bit of sacrifice. Whether it will be in one or two or three figures, you alone can determine. Frankly, if we are going to be effective prior to and at New Orleans, we need a lot of tens and twenties and fifties and hundreds. We promise that every dollar will be spent responsibly.

In this particular memo, the neoliberal myth is again perpetuated that political action is regrettably necessary only because of the "ultra-conservative organized forces." The following goals of the "evangelical [neoliberal] coalition" were included with the memo. This writer's appropriate comments are also included:

We will work to maintain our Synod's traditional confessional position and will repudiate any attempt to make "A Statement of Scriptural and Confessional Principles" a new standard of orthodoxy or a basis for doctrinal supervision in the LCMS. [The coalition will attempt to repudiate the 125-year-old doctrinal stance of the LCMS]

We will work to support and encourage the use of all scholarly tools and methods which assist us to understand and apply the Biblical message of Law and Gospel. God has spoken to His people in ancient times and continues to speak to us today through the Holy Scriptures, which remain our whole and infallible norm of faith and life. [The coalition will attempt to encourage use of the philosophical

historical-critical method]

We will work to restore evangelical supervision of doctrine consistent with our Synod's constitution and by-laws in matters concerning Concordia Seminary and all professional church workers. [The coalition will attempt to bring academic and theological freedom to synodical schools, free of interference from duly elected authorities]

We will work to elect evangelical leaders for the Synod who will bring peace and harmony and serve the welfare of the whole Church. [The coalition will attempt to fill all available administrative positions with neoliberals]

We will work to foster the widest possible involvement of all members of the Synod in achieving its objectives. To that end we will work for the best possible use of the democratic process and for decentralization of the making and implementing of decisions in a wide range of areas. [The coalition will attempt to take power from the synodical president and give it to the Council of Presidents]

We will work to heal divisions and resolve misunderstandings, so that our Synod can get on with our primary calling of getting the Gospel out to people. To this end we welcome the direction of the Mission Affirmations adopted by our Synod and are eager to continue to put them into full practice. [The coalition will attempt to lead the Synod as a church body further into social activism.]

We will work to continue expressing our God-given unity with our fellow Lutherans and other fellow Christians, and will seek an ever-increasing measure of this gift of unity which comes from the Holy Spirit. [The coalition will attempt to implement fellowship with both the ALC and LCA and join the Lutheran World Federation and World Council of Churches]

Neoliberal Delegates

Watch and listen for the following neoliberal leaders who will attempt to implement the goals of the coalition at the New Orleans convention:

Mr. Robert Madigan, member of the Stamford, Connecticut congregation, where many of the liberal meetings have been held.

Rev. Richard Koenig, the neoliberal writer and politician.

Rev. Arnold Wessler of Colorado will be an advisory delegate, the liberal influence in the life of former President Oliver Harms.

Rev. Omar Stuenkel of Maple Heights, Ohio, former editor of the Lutheran Witness, who was well-known for his promotion of the neoliberal cause through "Openness And Trust" and many articles.

Dr. Richard P. Jungkuntz of Tacoma, Washington, former aggressive neoliberal Executive for the CTCR.

Rev. Kurt Biel of Orlando, Florida, neoliberal supporter of President John Tietjen as a member of the St. Louis Board of Control.

Dr. Paul Bretscher of Valparaiso, Indiana, neoliberal politician on the CTCR.

Dr. Bertwin Frey, neoliberal of the English District.

Rev. Thomas Van der Bloeman, neoliberal district contact man for Kansas.

Mrs. Marilyn Volker of Florida, whose neoliberal husband is a graduate of St. Louis in 1972.

Mrs. Cynthia Truax, also of Florida whose neoliberal husband is a 1972 graduate of St. Louis Seminary.

The election of Mrs. Volker and Truax reveals the political ethics of the latest graduates of the St. Louis Seminary, as pastors' wives are counted as lay delegates from their circuits.

Dr. Wm. Buege of St. Louis, neoliberal supporter of President John Tietjen on St. Louis Board of Control.

Mr. Elmer Kraemer, former neoliberal editor of the Lutheran Layman of St. Louis.

Dr. Arthur C. Repp, advisory pastor of the Missouri District.

Rev. Robert Smith, also a professor of the St. Louis Seminary, neoliberal advisory delegate from Missouri.

Neoliberal Andrew Weyermann of the St. Louis Seminary, neoliberal delegate from the Missouri District.

Rev. Ivan Gundermann of Chicago, neoliberal friend of Pastor Lueking.

Rev. Eugene Roeder of Chicago, neoliberal friend of Pastor Lueking.

Mrs. Walter Christopher of River Forest, neoliberal member of Pastor Lueking's congregation.

Rev. Eugene Brueggemann of Evanston, Illinois neoliberal campus pastor and friend of Pastor Lueking. These, together with neoliberal presidents like Jacobs, Ressmeyer, Crosmer, Waldemar, Meyer, Riedel, Neunaber, Ellermann, and Goetz will be heard at the convention. May the delegates understand their neoliberal strategy so that there is no confusion for what these men are working.

PART THREE

THE FUTURE

Prologos (see p. 2)

In May 1965, Faith Forward First Concerns, a large, conservative protest movement, completely repudiated the historical-critical method as it began to appear in full force at the seminary and synodical schools: "The 'new hermeneutic' (historical-critical method of interpretation) takes a basic step away from and is incompatible with the very fundamentals of the doctrine of inspiration and the principles of interpretation which are inherent in Luther's teachings, the Confessions and the Expositions of Luther's Catechisms."

At this same time President Harms was under attack from persons who realized what was going on. On October 26, 1965, a pastor told President Harms: "You are no leader, but you have allowed yourself to become a captive or pawn of the liberal [neoliberal] element which is determined to destroy our church from within." During that time, families were leaving Missouri Synod congregations because of the inaction on the part of officials.

In 1966 at a convention for teachers in the Nebraska District, one conservative exclaimed: "This whole thing makes me so sick, I just can't stand it anymore. This has taken all the joy out of my work for the Lord... Why do our leaders cry 'peace peace' when there is no peace?"

Gulf Widens

Continual criticism from the field dealing with synodical school graduates and pastors was very strong in 1968. From District Presidents to pastors, the discovery was being made that students were as far away from conservative theology as "North and South." It should not be surprising to learn that in January 1973, a 1972 graduate of the seminary was stopped in the middle of his sermon because of false doctrine by an elder of one of the Oklahoma churches. Although during those days the majority of students did become wonderful pastors, the gulf between student and laity was ever widening, as Board of Control member Burmeister clearly indicates (Report, p. 143).

Because of the uncertainty of where seminary graduates stood theologically, some congregations in Synod began to produce their own call documents.

In May 1972, the Council of District Presidents "expressed concern over the listing of additional requirements and resolved that only official call documents should be used in the church." But congregations managed to get around that stipulation by putting new pastors under "contract" rather than issuing them a "call." If after a year, the pastor was seen to be conservative, the congregation could issue him a permanent call. If he was neoliberal, he would be sent back to the seminary, to be put on that call list once more, as long as the district to where he had been contracted was unable to find a place for him.

In fact, in my own case, this writer was put on contract for those very reasons. Because of the importance of making sure that a conservative congregation has the right kind of pastor, a memorial sent to the New Orleans convention is asking that all future graduates of synodical schools be under contract until their theological stance is known.

As well as protests made to the English District other neoliberal districts were protested. On March 20, 1972, concerned Lutherans in the Atlantic District protested to President Ressmeyer the manner in which calls were processed.

On Holy Calls there are those who feel that the District [here referring to the Atlantic] is interfering with congregational efforts in obtaining sound Lutheran pastors who are evangelical. Calls are not processed as congregations send them through the District office, to their satisfaction. Tremendous suspicion of the District makes many pastors apprehensive and concerned that if they don't go along with District they will never 'get anywhere....' Many of us have been really disturbed by the blatant militancy expressed toward our Synod's President by speakers and chairmen at District Conferences. This rudeness is in itself destroying confidence in the very ones doing this.

The Detroit Convention Workbook, Memorial 2-25 (page 73) tells how the Northwest District Praesidium provided evidence to synod that they had confronted the seminary officials with their concerns about the doctrinal content of the St. Louis teaching, but they received no satisfaction.

Europeans Protest

It was not only individuals who protested neoliberal activity in the Missouri Synod. The Evangelical Lutheran Free Church in Germany, France and Denmark sent the following message to the delegates of the synodical convention in Denver:

A recognition of Church fellowship between your Church and the ALC would at the same time imply the basic decision on our part that it is in principle possible, both from the theological and ecclesiological viewpoint, to hold membership in the LWF and the World Council of Churches. Such a decision would directly affect us and our relationship with a sister Church which we respect and love. No one has ever denied that many of the member Churches of the LWF do not measure up to the standard of the Lutheran Confessions.

Even though the message was sent to St. Louis on March 8 with a request that it be printed in the convention workbook, it never appeared.

Dr. William Oesch of Germany protested:

It is impossible to imagine that you can carry on this half-baked fellowship with the American Lutheran Church for any stretch of time without going down the drain and fellowshiping also with the ALC's close sister, the Lutheran Church Of America, which in its stated course has long become a sectarian liberal body not to be reclaimed.

The strongest protest after the declaration of ALC fellowship came from members of The Evangelical Lutheran Church Synod of France and Belgium:

The LCMS, through this decision has shown that it has become a 'different Church' from what it was, a Church which, in such matters as church-fellowship, or the necessity of an internal doctrinal consensus, practices a theology different from that which had so far been accepted and which had so far been the basis for our fellowship with the LCMS. We are forced to conclude that a majority of its constituency has now wilfully abandoned the basis of the fellowship which existed between their Church and the allied Confessional Lutheran Free Churches in Europe in general, and our Free Church in France and Belgium in particular. It must also be noted that the LCMS has, in these matters, totally disregarded the solemn appeals of its sister Churches, including ours, and acted against

the duty imposed by fraternal love, of mutual consultation in matters of conscience, such as the scriptural principles of church-fellowship.

Withholding Of Funds

A common or typical form of conservative protest was the withholding of funds or contributions from congregation and synod. As far back as October 11, 1965, St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Mount Clemens, Michigan, withheld mission funds from the synod. The congregation told President Harms that they were taking the action because of the disregard toward the synodically-adopted doctrinal position "with regard to the Pentateuch, Jonah, Adam and Eve, sin, Messianic prophecies." There is no doubt that the majority of churches which withheld funds did so because of the doctrinal unrest in synod and particularly at the St. Louis Seminary.

After the seminary student moratorium of 1969, one pastor wrote that "It is time to protest in a way that my church and seminary will understand. No violence of course, no visible demonstrations in the streets: It will be the quiet and 'responsible and orderly manner' of dissent and protest by directing our church's contributions into different channels of Preaching the Gospel." It is a well-known fact that other Lutheran groups have received money which would have gone into synod's coffers had the doctrinal controversy been cleared up. It has affected giving considerably by many individuals throughout the synod.

The neoliberals accused the conservatives of blackmailing the synod into changing its position. But the real reason for the withholding of money was a sincere desire to spread the pure Word, not false teaching, and to support only orthodox church activities. Another pastor from North Carolina wrote an official of synod, asking for advice:

Number one is my concern that part of my offerings (not mine but the Lord's) are going to support such men as Neuhaus, Saffen, most of the St. Louis Sem boys, as well as some at River Forest and St. Paul in their prostitution of false teachings in Synod. Let there be no doubt. I am accountable when I know that I am in part contributing to blasphemy in any form.

The withholding of funds became so serious in 1965 that a number of District Presidents protested to President Harms that the synod was a divided church. One of the problems the presidents found in their districts was that "people are losing the

joy in giving offerings to Synod." A Senior College professor wrote on May 29, 1965: "In my own mind I'm convinced that the problem is doctrinal... the brethren just don't have their hearts in it when it comes to appealing for money for Synod."

Ebenezer

Probably no fund suffered more from the doctrinal diversity than did the Ebenezer Thankoffering. After Ebenezer failed miserably in attempting to reach its objectives, Dr. John C. Baur gave a reason for the lack of contributions:

At the head of the list of reasons for Ebenezer's failure we place the widespread uneasiness about doctrinal aberration among the teachers of our future pastors, teachers and missionaries and the uncertainty as to what is being done about it. Bland denials failed to satisfy where convincing refutation or courageous correction were called for.

After neoliberal Bill Irving spoke at an LLL Seminar in Quincy, Illinois, one pastor wrote that "looking over the folks at the meeting that night, I'd guess conservatively that our \$40 million offering [Ebenezer] lost about \$3,000 that night." Lest the reader thinks that these protests were merely scattered, the following should erase that myth: In August 1966, 114 pastors of the Iowa West District adopted and transmitted to Dr. Harms a letter concerning the problems of synod:

Simultaneously, and this disturbs us no end, there is before us no small undertaking, the "Ebenezer Thankoffering." Our people are asking whether priority is to be given to this thankoffering or whether we of our Synod should not rather put our doctrinal house in order first before we enlarge much of our external property, erect seminaries where instructors insist upon academic freedom at the expense of the inspired Word of God.

Some neoliberals have contended that the lack of funds is not due to doctrinal unrest but rather centers on a high cost of living in the country. The problem with that myth is that our Lutherans don't mind giving to something when they know their money will be spent wisely. The "His Too" cam-

paign to raise over \$5,500,000 for three Missouri Synod institutions was quite successful and the Lutheran School for the Deaf in Detroit raised so much money that it went over its goal by \$100,000!

When the neoliberals were in control of synodical administration, they would constantly accuse conservatives of withholding funds as a blackmail technique. But the fact of the matter is neoliberals are also reticent about sending money to a central location where some of it may bespent to support projects or teachings opposed to the neoliberal stance.

On September 11 and 12, 1972, the Board of Directors of the English District deplored "the manner in which Dr. Preus employs the rhetoric of reconciliation decrying divisiveness in the synod when he considers divisive any aberration from what he himself has judged to be our 'synodical position.'" This board resolved, therefore, to direct President Baumgaertner, if necessary, and at his discretion, in the event of emergency, to hold all contributions of the English District to the Synod in escrow should President Preus or the Board of Higher Education continue to refuse the overtures of good will and evangelical persuasion which the Board of Control of Concordia Seminary have offered the Synod in their report to the president."

It was not long before conservative congregations in the English District were up in arms that the money they had sent to the district for synod could be manipulated in such a way. The threat of the English District to withhold funds if Dr. Preus didn't comply with the demands of the District Board of Directors, quickly dissipated when wiser minds on the Council of Presidents persuaded the neoliberal leaders of the English District that such actions was unwarranted but also illegal. At any rate, conservatives believe that they will no longer hear cries of blackmail and extortion from neoliberals when funds need to be withheld.

Unfortunately, such withholding is occurring during the 125th Anniversary Thankoffering as congregations are just too unsure of to whom the leadership of the synod will be entrusted at New Orleans. Until conservatives are assured that the seminary will be cleansed and that the traditional Missouri Synod theology is brought back into the curriculum, it appears that withholding mission funds from synod will be a common practice.

CHAPTER 14

SYNODICALLY-ADOPTED DOCTRINAL RESOLUTIONS

For years the LCMS has met in convention and adopted many doctrinal statements which it has asked the laity, pastors, teachers, and professors to honor, support, and uphold. Only recently has there been an organized movement to say that what the synod has decided in its conventions, the seminary professor can ignore in the classroom. In other words, neoliberals do not believe that synodically-adopted doctrinal statements are binding!

This neoliberal myth is based on several false notions. The first is that regarding them as binding makes them "as equal to the historic Lutheran Confessions. This is both unconstitutional and unlutheran." There is a myth in that statement; no conservative is saying that since they are binding, synodically-adopted doctrinal resolutions are at the same level as the Confessions. One basic difference between the Confessions and synodically-adopted doctrinal resolutions is that the Confessions can never be changed or modified, while synodically-adopted doctrinal resolutions may, since they are in essence, reaffirming the Confessions and applying them as corrections to aberrations as they appear in various forms from time to time. But until the synod in convention is shown that a particular resolution is unscriptural and/or in contradiction with the Confessions, it continues to be binding on the members of the synod. They are binding to members who have voluntarily joined the LCMS, not to other Lutherans.

Binding does not mean "binding for salvation." If a member of synod refuses for conscience sake to agree with doctrinal statements, he would certainly feel constrained to leave the synod. He could beforehand most certainly attempt to change the synodical doctrinal stance, but if he failed to convince the delegates, he would, obeying his conscience, sever his connection, as others have done in the past. To remain, nonetheless, and use a seminary classroom or any other place to argue against synodical resolutions is simply dishonest.

President emeritus O. P. Kretzmann of Valparaiso University goes so far as to say that since the essence of the Confessions is the Gospel of Jesus Christ, therefore any attempt to substitute for that Gospel a "series of doctrinal resolutions... is almost blasphemous." The strawman then for which Dr. Kretzmann is contending is that conser-

vatives substitute doctrinal resolutions for the Gospel.

A neoliberal professor recently wrote this writer that our confessional basis, "spelled out in Article II of our Constitution, does not include synodically-adopted resolutions of any kind. If you were to assert a claim to the contrary, you would be open to the charge of altering the Synod's 125-year-old confessional basis, which I doubt you really want to do." Not only this writer, but also Dr. Walther disagreed with that contention. That same contention is found in Pastor Bertwin L. Frey's pamphlet, What Is A Lutheran Pastor: "The Synod has steadfastly refused to impose on its pastors and teachers yardsticks for measuring orthodoxy which go beyond Article II of the Constitution."

Historical Precedent

If the two previous statements mean that synod has always refused to bind someone else's membership in synod to a doctrinally-accepted resolution voted on by synod in Convention, then both are in error. As Professor Robert Preus says:

There is good historical evidence that Synod has thought of doctrinal statements as binding. First of all, such an action has good precedent in the history of confessional Lutheranism. In the late sixteenth century, after the Book of Concord was subscribed and Crypto-Calvinists were still active in Saxony, the Lutherans wrote and subscribed to the so-called Saxon Visitation Articles, and those who would not subscribe were not allowed to be pastors in Saxony. Again in the nineteenth century, when the Lutheran doctrine of election and conversion was denied among American Lutherans, Dr. Walther wrote thirteen theses on election which were to be accepted by all members of Synod. Such documents were never designed to be new confessions on a permanent par with our Book of Concord. They were ad hoc documents designed to settle controversies which threatened the unity of the church in a certain place and time.

Former vice-President Repp of the St. Louis Seminary, has been speaking out against binding

resolutions for a number of years now. Back on April 26, 1965, Professor Sauer was criticized for his historical-critical teachings which no longer upheld synodically-adopted doctrinal resolutions. As one observer noted: "Repp became almost violent in defending him. He suggested that we had changed our minds on other items such as the usury question and life insurance. Someone called to his attention that these are peripheral matters, and not nearly as crucial and important as the doctrine of inspiration and its implications."

Dr. Repp has continued though, to argue that since we have changed our position in the past, therefore we dare not make any resolutions binding today. When President Baumgaertner borrowed Repp's arguments and said that "You were told, in militant rhetoric that life insurance was a sinful gambling with one's life" and then used this as evidence that synod had changed, Rev. L. W. Faulstick wrote him the following:

Your bald statement that 'life insurance was condemned,' leads the average person to think that life insurance then was the same thing as life insurance is now. That is far from correct. Life insurance originally was purely a gamble. If a person paid his premiums and outlived the time of his insurance, he lost everything. It was only if he died during the life of the policy that his family benefitted. That is quite different from the various forms of life insurance issued today. So let the reader not be confused by your bald statement.

In the second place: The Synod has never as such, taken a stand against life insurance. There may have been individuals, ministers, or laymen, who did denounce it, but Synod has never taken a stand. Quote me the Proceedings giving year, page, etc. I have searched repeatedly but never found any evidence.

When Dr. Repp was questioned why neoliberals uphold synodically-adopted doctrinal resolutions on racism, mission affirmations and lodge, he replied that they were to be "enforced by the synod not because they are covered by articles in the Confessions, but because they have the authority of Scripture behind them, and certainly not because Synod passed a resolution." What Dr. Repp forgets is that delegates to a convention vote for doctrinal resolutions because they do have the authority of Scripture behind them! The doctrinal resolution against women ordination is binding because the authority of Scripture lies behind it. According to Dr. Repp's reasoning, one would have to have another vote on resolutions to decide which ones

have Scripture behind them and which ones don't. Obviously, in the minds of the delegates, the only reason they voted for them as binding was because they believed that Scripture was behind them.

Milwaukee

The neoliberal interpretation concerning the decision of the Milwaukee convention on the binding nature of doctrinal resolutions is that Milwaukee refused to bind them since the convention replaced the committee's statement with a statement by the Council of Presidents. But we have seen that since the convention also voted on the whereases and preambles of both resolutions, it becomes clear that doctrinal resolutions are binding. As one layman Chet Swanson has suggested: "Sit down in the quiet of your study and read 2-21 without any outside commentary. It doesn't sound like a church body that doesn't care what anybody preaches or teaches."

That is the point of the whole discussion. President Preus said in his report before the Milwaukee convention:

Does an evangelical and confessional church body such as ours have the right and duty to adopt doctrinal statements which are in complete conformity with Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions--and then expect her pastors, teachers, and professors, out of faithfulness to Scripture and the Confessions, to believe, teach, and confess according to such statement? In the past, the answer has been a resounding yes."

In Media Information for the Milwaukee Convention, the following reasons were given for making doctrinal statements binding:

(1) Article II of the Synod's constitution is not adequate. Arriving at Scriptural 'truths' is largely a matter of interpretation; if you use the wrong method of interpreting Scripture (historical-critical method), you don't come up with Scriptural truth; (2) The Lutheran Confessions do not deal with contemporary theological problems (inspiration, inerrancy, authorship of certain Biblical books); therefore, more exposition of the Scriptures is needed from time to time; (3) When the Synod in convention adopts statements or declarations intended as a further exposition of the Scriptures, this is the 'Synod's position,' this is what the 'Synod stands for,' this is what 'should be taught' in higher institutions of learning operated by the Synod; (4) The Synod authorizes people to teach in its colleges and

seminaries; therefore, the Synod should have the authority to determine what shall be in its schools. If a professor can't teach in accordance with synodically-adopted doctrinal statements, he should be 'disciplined.'

Conservatives want the historical 125-year-old stance of the Missouri Synod to continue so that

professors would no longer be able to propagate their disastrous use of the historical-critical method in interpreting the Scriptures. Neoliberals no longer want synodical resolutions binding because they desire to use the historical-critical method which leads to conclusions contradicting the present doctrinal resolutions of the Lutheran Church -- Missouri Synod.

CHAPTER 15

CONFESSIONAL AND SCRIPTURAL PRINCIPLES

I STATEMENT

President Preus after consultation with the vice-presidents of synod issued the Statement in order to bring order out of the confusion caused by the historical-critical method during the inquiry of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis. The Statement is conservative in that it agrees with the 125-year-old stance of the Missouri Synod in rejecting what the faculty majority of the St. Louis Seminary accepts.

When President Preus issued the Statement he stated that it was not to be a new or additional standard of orthodoxy. Before long, conservative professors, pastors, teachers, and lay persons were hailing it as a beautiful summary of 125 years of Missouri Synod theology. The neoliberals immediately made charges that it had not been issued as a new standard of orthodoxy yet all the conservatives were attempting to use it to judge false teaching. Soon the faculty majority at Concordia Seminary condemned the Statement as a "criterion to determine doctrinal soundness."

Unfortunately, the neoliberals had misread what President Preus meant by the Statement not being a new standard of orthodoxy. This did not mean that it could not be used to judge false doctrine: Indeed, the Statement was not a new standard of orthodoxy because it was an old standard of orthodoxy. With every assertion taken from the Scriptures, the Confessions, or synodically-adopted doctrinal resolutions, there was nothing new about the Statement at all.

The Statement rejects over 50 false teachings. The St. Louis faculty majority statement stated that "in most cases [the antitheses are] not the position of any member of this faculty." This was very surprising because of the 53 antitheses this writer found 30 which are taught at the seminary as allowable theories. In the April 19, 1972, Spectrum, this

writer attempted to resolve the apparent conflict between what the faculty majority said and what is taught in class:

When some of us first received President Preus' 'Statement' it seemed obvious that more than a few of the antitheses mirrored what had been heard in class. But then the faculty majority response indicates that those antitheses are 'in most cases not the position of any member of this faculty.' May I offer a possible solution to this dilemma. I believe the problem resides in the relatively new distinction -- based, I think, on the presuppositions and conclusions of the historical-critical method -- that one can distinguish between what he personally holds to and what he allows others to believe. For example, it is not uncommon to hear someone affirm his personal belief in the historical Fall, but then not find it necessary to oppose ordination of one who holds the opposite point of view. It may be true that this opposite point of view is 'not the position of any member of this faculty.' But is not true that most members of the faculty majority -- on account of their allegiance to the historical-critical method -- do not allow and teach this opposite point of view as a possible option. In short, if one reads President Preus' 'Statement' with the idea of what is allowed and taught as possible options the distinction to what a professor may personally theorize, then he may have a better idea of what the antitheses are saying. Therefore the reply of the faculty majority that the antitheses do not represent personal positions, not only confuses the distinction between personal belief and allowability, but also misses the intent of the 'Statement'; namely, that such positions which some of the antitheses describe (see especially IV F) [on Scripture] are in fact taught as optional positions allowed to

to be held by future pastors of the LCMS.

Karl Barth

After a particularly strong criticism of the Statement by President Baumgaertner of the English District, printed in the public press, President Karl Barth of the Southern Wisconsin District wrote an open letter:

In my judgment it is unfortunate that President Baumgaertner wrote as he did. He is distressed, for example, that the guidelines were sent to the church 'without prior consultation.' This statement is really not accurate. Dr. Preus -- and his letter states it plainly -- drew up those guidelines in consultation with the vice-presidents, who agree that they are 'Biblical and confessional'.... [President Baumgaertner] attacks the president of the Synod for guidelines that 'threaten to stifle... freedom within the framework of the Lutheran Confessions to search the Scriptures....' But he does not say in what way these guidelines are guilty of stifling freedom.... In short, the statement of Dr. Baumgaertner does not speak to the issues. It levels a general 'hit-and-run' attack that can hardly promote healing.

President Barth's statement makes clear that the vice-presidents of synod had agreed that the Statement was biblical and confessional. Obviously, then, it was not a new standard of orthodoxy. Then the Commission on Theology and Church Relations (CTCR) "found its doctrinal content in accord with the Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions (Lutheran Witness, December 17, 1972)." Soon after, the Board of Control of Springfield Theological Seminary adopted a resolution stating its intention to employ the Statement "in overseeing the work of the school." The members of the board regarded "the Statement's doctrinal content to be in accord with the Scriptures, the Lutheran Confessions, and the Missouri Synod's doctrinal position."

In stark contrast to the many conservatives who were agreeing that the Statement was in accord with the Scriptures, the Lutheran Confessions and the synod's doctrinal stance, the St. Louis faculty majority felt that the Statement was "unlutheran." The theological gulf also between the two seminaries was more than obvious. Former Professor Walter Bartling told the truth when he said, "They caught most of us in some way on most of the points in Preus' Statement."

Two pastors in Illinois in one letter secured 1300

responses from pastors expressing their agreement with the Statement. Before long, the conservatives realized that the Statement not only was confessional and Scriptural, but was exactly the kind of doctrinal resolution which could be used to uncover false teaching in the synodical schools.

II CROSSROADS

On January 1, 1973, a group of prominent Missouri Synod pastors, professors, and laity signed a letter written by Professor Walter A. Maier, Junior, of the Springfield Seminary. They sent the letter entitled Crossroads out to congregations in synod asking for signatures. Within three months they had over 250,000 endorsements. The number is still growing by significant leaps.

Realizing that the neoliberal "Statement" (Declaration of Determination) received only 1,400 signatures, gives one a fairly good idea of which group represents the majority in synod and which the minority.

In line with the Milwaukee Conventions desire to have "Formal Statements of Belief" adopted, the conservatives are hoping that the Statement will be one of these formal statements. There is no doubt that the Statement not only adequately presents the Missouri Synod scriptural and confessional stance, but, more importantly, that it clearly differentiates conservative from neoliberal. It will be up to the synod in convention to decide which theology will prevail. A vote for the Statement will affirm the 125-year-old Missouri Synod theological position and give President Preus another aid in helping the faculty at Concordia Seminary to realize what synod regards as Lutheran doctrine. A vote against the Statement will be confusing because there is no way to tell whether the vote is for the neoliberals or whether it is just against the idea of having binding resolutions.

Remember, however, the two historical precedents when the Missouri Synod needed to have other statements (Saxon Visitation Article; The Thirteen Theses during the Predestinarian Controversy), and recall that on a synod wide scale the neoliberal Declaration attracted 1,400 supporters whereas Crossroads in a few months was endorsed by a quarter of a million. What is so amazing is that these 250,000 endorsements continue to be augmented even though the Council of Presidents, by a vote of 22 to 12, urged the synod members "not to participate in any churchwide referendums supporting President Preus, or other individuals." This totally inconsistent action led President Schlecht of the Michigan District to write that much of the blame for the polarization within the synod must

rest on the shoulders of the Council of Presidents.

In an open letter which appeared in Affirm (April 1973), Southern Wisconsin District President Karl Barth stated:

Several remarks are in order regarding Crossroads. One has to do with the selective indignation of the Council. When Christian News broadcasts the troubles of the church, the Council repudiates the publication. When other periodicals, written by members of Synod, publicly marshal anti-administration forces for New Orleans, members of the Council are privately encouraged to 'deal pastorally' with the situation. When 'A Call to Openness and Trust' is thrust upon the church, no resolution is forthcoming. When Crossroad appears, the council makes an appeal against 'unauthorized solicitation' of the church. When the President is maligned, the Council is strangely silent. When the President is supported, the Council decries polarization.

True, 'all other instances' of unauthorized solicitation are condemned in the resolution, but significantly it is Crossroads which stirred the Council to action. And only Crossroads is named. It is this basic inconsistency in applying Christian ethics that prompted me, in the November 1972 meeting, to make a matter of record my disassociation from the repudiation of Christian News.

Doctrine Voted Upon

Another neoliberal tactic used to oppose the Statement becoming a doctrinal resolution of the synod is the contention that matters of doctrine are not voted on. The misunderstanding of the neoliberals lies in the phrase "voted on." One conservative has said: "The only purpose of voting in matters of doctrine is to see whether all now understand the teaching of the divine Word and agree to it; the purpose of the vote is not to decide the correctness of a doctrine by a majority vote or even a unanimous vote." The person who wrote that was Dr. August Pieper. Another conservative wrote along similar lines: "If when matters of this kind are under consideration, a vote is taken, this dare not be done in order to let the majority of votes decide but to learn by way of the vote whether

all have recognized what is right and are in agreement with it." This writer's name is Dr. C. F. W. Walther. These two statements refute, not only the neoliberal myth that the resolution on the ordination of women is not a doctrinal resolution because there was a vote, but also the myth about synod's past "understanding" that the convention cannot vote on doctrine.

One other conservative has written the following ideas in connection with Matthew 7:15:

Observe that He (Jesus) here assigns the judgment not to the prophets and teachers, but to the pupils, or the sheep. For how could one beware of false prophets unless one examined, judged, and gave a decision on their teachings. Indeed, there can be no false prophets among the hearers, but among the teachers alone. All teachers should and must therefore, be subject with their teaching to the judgment of the hearers.... The hearers not only have the power and the right to judge all preaching, but are obliged to judge it under penalty of forfeiting the favor of Divine Majesty.

The writer's name is Martin Luther. The title of his little pamphlet written in 1523 is, The Right And Power Of A Christian Congregation Or Community To Judge All Teaching And To Call, Appoint, And Dismiss Teachers, Established And Proved From Scripture.

In the introductory part of Solid Declaration of the Formula of Concord, Summary Formulation, paragraph 9 of the Lutheran Confessions, Martin Luther is mentioned as asserting that "the Word of God is and should remain the sole rule and norm of all doctrine, and that no human being's writings dare be put on a par with it, but that everything be subjected to it." The next paragraph is more than helpful for our purposes: "This, of course, does not mean that other good, useful, and pure books, such as interpretations of the Holy Scriptures, refutations of errors, and expositions of doctrinal articles, should be rejected. If they are in accord with the aforementioned pattern of doctrine they are to be accepted and used as helpful expositions and explanations." This needs to be kept in mind the next time a neoliberal mentions that the synod cannot make synodically-adopted doctrinal resolutions binding.

CONCLUSIONS

To turn back the attempt at neoliberal doctrinal and political control of synod, two things must be done. At the New Orleans convention a conservative President needs to be elected and must be given the Statement as a standard of orthodoxy for our contemporary age. Guided by this standard he is held to decide what is true, what is false, what is Scriptural, what is confessional, and what ought to be believed, taught and confessed in the Missouri Synod.

Dr. Lawrence B. Meyer wrote in his book, Missouri in Motion:

Unless this 'new hermeneutic [historical - critical method] is rooted out of our midst, our orthodoxy of yesterday will degenerate into something tomorrow which will be an abomination unto the Lord. This is not merely conjecture. It can be documented by the development of history of most of the major Protestant church bodies in the world. And please note that history also documents that such unorthodox methods of using the doctrine of the 'inspired Word' did not originate with the laity nor with the rank and file of the clergy, but in seminaries -- beginning with Wittenberg immediately after Luther's death.

On February 9, 1968, John Warwick Montgomery stated that his studies in church history indicated unequivocally that when conservatives continue the downhill trek after the end of effective discipline, they allow their church to be sold down the river each and every day.

Things get progressively worse; more mission money is misused every year; more liberals are appointed to high positions; more young pastors with liberal leaning enter the pulpits; more false teaching enters the educational materials of the church etc.; etc. Tragically though, Missouri still has more conservative Christians in it than virtually any other Church in the U.S., yet as the trend is going, Missouri in fifty years [editor: ten years] will be virtually indistinguishable from the United Presbyterian Church....

Dr. Walter A. Lammerts wrote on May 20, 1965: "The minute you abandon belief in the factual historicity of Genesis I and II, you are on the way to denying the virgin birth, Christ's miracles, and even his real resurrection."

Dr. Francis Schaeffer cites a parallel to what could happen in the LCMS today:

Dr. Clarence McCartney... was elected Moderator of the Presbyterian Church, and it was immediately after this that the liberals took over in a total way in the Presbyterian Church. Looking back on it, what happened was that the conservatives felt they had gained a tremendous victory in the election of a conservative Moderator and spent much time rejoicing in the victory, while the liberals simply consolidated their position in the church bureaucracy. On this basis the liberal victory was complete and McCartney was the last Bible-believing Moderator ever to be elected in the Presbyterian Church. It was soon after this that they took over the complete control of the church and all its educational institutions.

I do feel that this moment in the Missouri Synod situation could either follow this unhappy situation or, learning from it, that the conservatives would not make this mistake and would continue the struggle in the real places of authority in the church and in the institutions.

Truly, the controversy in our synod is not over the "right angle to slice pickles." It is about God's Word as God gave it by the prophets and apostles. It is about the Gospel itself.

We who would be Christians must not fail to calculate upon having the devil with all his angels, as well as the world, for our enemies who will prepare all kinds of sorrow and misfortune for us. For wherever God's Word is preached, is accepted or believed, and bears fruit, there the dear, holy cross of persecution will not be wanting. Let no one think that he will live in peace: rather that he must risk all he has upon earth--possessions, honor, home and estate, wife and child, body and life. Now, this causes sorrow to our flesh and the old Adam; for it means that we must surrender what is taken from us. Hence, it is necessary in this, as in every other case, that we pray without ceasing: Thy will be done, dear Father, and not the will of the devil or our enemies, nor of those who would persecute and destroy thy Word, or prevent thy kingdom from coming; and grant that all we have to suffer because of it may be borne with patience and be overcome, thus saving our poor flesh from yielding or falling through weakness or indolence.

Martin Luther
Large Catechism: Lord's Prayer
(Third Petition)

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APPENDIX

EXPLANATION OF COVER AND TITLE

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1,400

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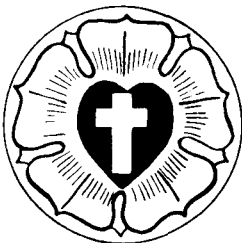
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The number of endorsements attached to the conservative letter Crossroads supporting the Statement of Confessional and Scriptural Principles



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